

Love and Its Affinities

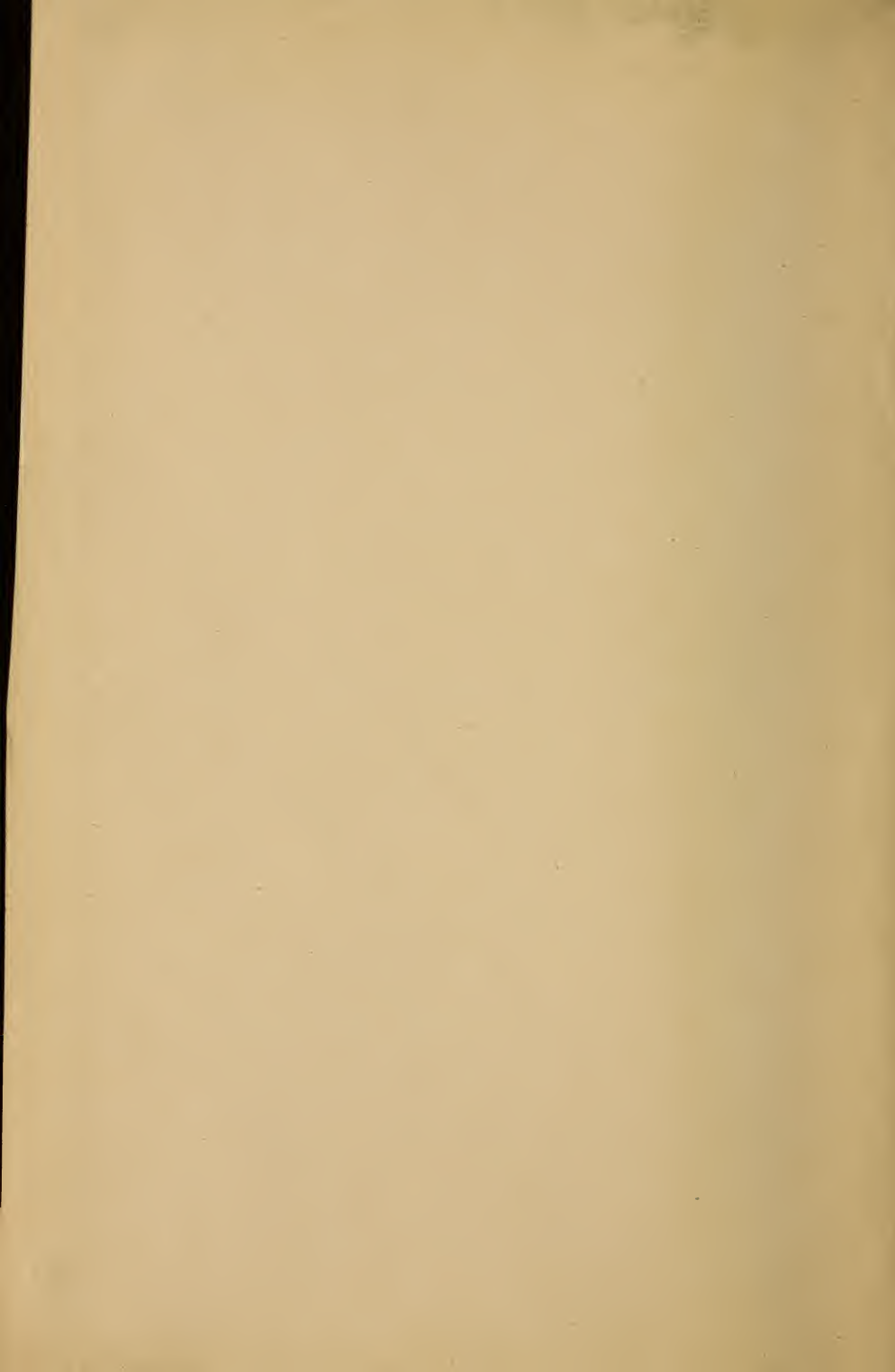
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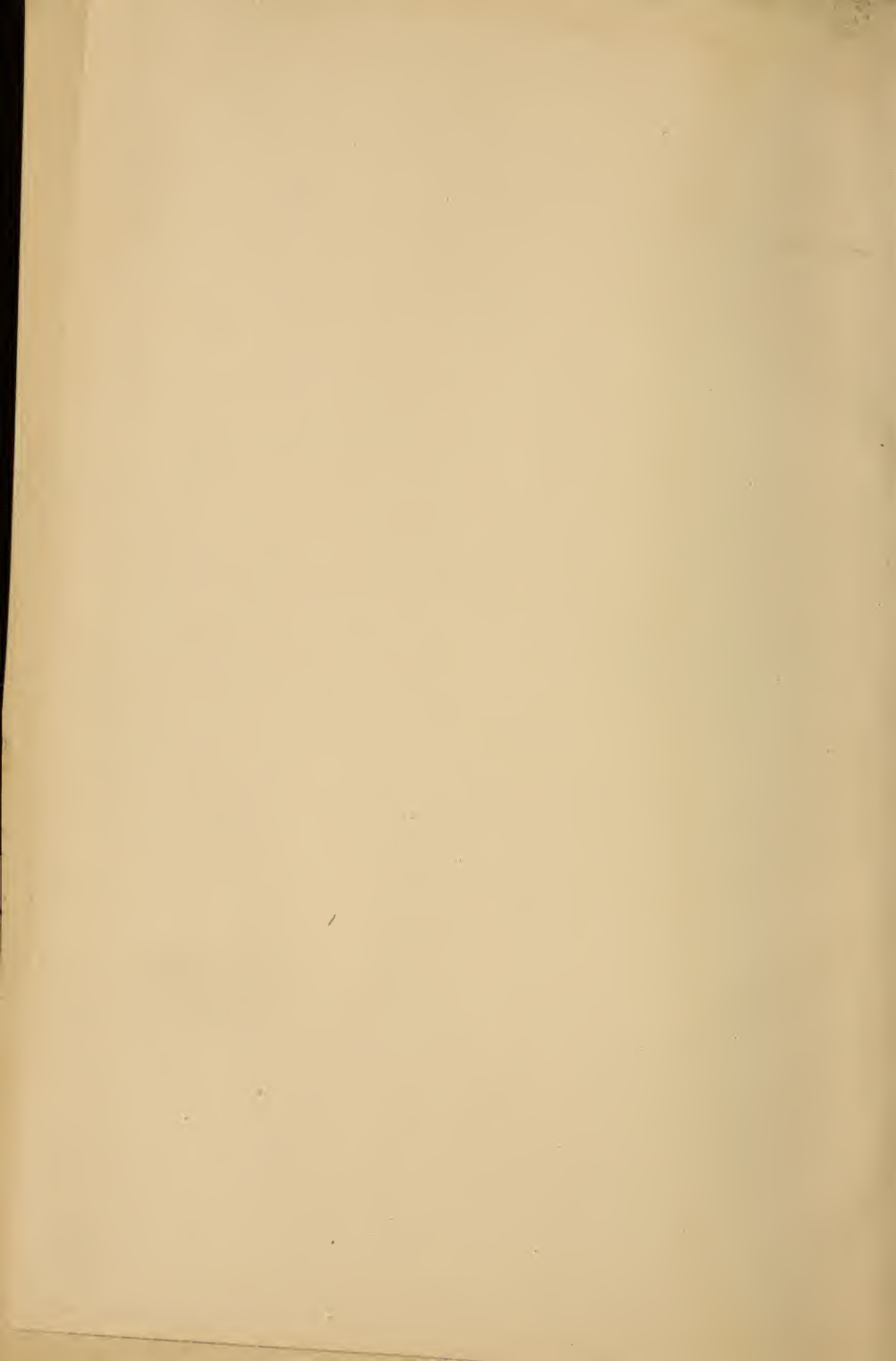
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"Sharpening their arrows."

—*Raphael Mengs.*

"LOVING GOES BY HAPS,
SOME CUPID KILLS WITH ARROWS.
SOME WITH TRAPS."

—"MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING."

LOVE

AND ITS AFFINITIES.

BY

GEORGE F. BUTLER, M. D.



S'Amor non è; che dunque è quel chi' i' sento?

—Petrarca. S 102.

Oh Love, if thou art not, what ails my heart?

But if create,—thy nature then reveal:

If fair,—with mortal pain why o'er me steal?

If ill,—so sweet a torment why impart?

—Trans. Susan Wollaston.



È cieco chi s' abusa

De tuoi doni innocenti;

È fanciul chi t' accusa

Del proprio error. Tu l' universo annodi

In concorde amistà. Tutto germoglia,

Tutto ride per te. Di te la terra,

Di te s' adorna il cielo; e più che mai

Oggi onor degli Dei,

Delizia oggi del mondo, Amor, tu sei.

—Metastasio. *Il Triunfo d' Amore.*

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PREFACE.

In presenting the following pages the author's desire has been, not so much to offer an empirical, scientific consideration of human passion, as a philosophical study of Love and its relationship to psychical, as well as physiological phenomena, with which the most exalted sentiment of sexual attraction is closely allied. With this object in view, the requirements of truth and candor exacted a perfectly frank and serious treatment of the subject, a portrayal of Lust and of a polluted imagination being as essential to complete delineation as shadows to a picture. The grosser features of the sexual instinct—of itself ideally pure—revolting as they may appear, have therefore not been disguised. Yet, as the stainless Nymphaea lifts its radiant beauty above the noisome ooze from which it springs, the *motif* of the present monograph is an ascent from lower to higher, purer phases of passion—an aspiration whose heavenward struggle and stately florescence are the crown and glory of mortal love.

Inadequate as must be so brief and imperfect a contemplation of his theme, the author trusts that here and there some passing suggestion may prove inspiring to those whose faith in human goodness has not been chilled by the mournful lessons of observation or experience, however disheartening they may have been, and that the sweeter, holier emotions of the soul herein depicted may receive just homage.

Chicago, Ill., April, 1899.

INTRODUCTION.

The subject of the present thesis is one which lies at the foundation of society; permeates, albeit unconsciously, the thoughts, the aspirations, and the spiritual welfare of mankind, and forms, as it were, the woof into which are woven the intricate threads of human existence. The suggestions arising from a thoughtful contemplation of the triune motive—Lust, Love, and Religion—are endless, as they are of profound interest, the field covered by a consideration of these component forces embracing alike primitive man and the latest offspring of our race.

It is consequently impossible to present in a few general observations the manifold phases of so vast an inquiry. That the world at large dwells in comparative ignorance of its secret stimuli to thought and action, so far as they affect sexual passion, is to be deplored, since an ampler knowledge of its psychological *raison d' être* and attendant phenomena might clarify the obscure medium in which many a pure and virtuous life is shrouded. The mental anguish often occasioned by lack of a just apprehension of ideas and their logical connection is unspeakable—most of all, when a clear conception of

the inviolable laws governing an entity so complex as man is essential to human happiness.

The theme of our discussion, therefore, is of so vital an import, that it demands a searching inquiry regarding occult manifestations of passions subtly interwoven, their analysis well-nigh evading the most competent scrutiny. It is important that the investigation should be conducted in accordance with the scientific methods applicable to all examination of philosophic truth, with the sole object of tracing, so far as our knowledge permits, the reaction of animal upon spiritual life, and, *vice versa*, the influence of sublimated passion and imaginative purity upon sensual man.

That the highest, most sacred phases of religious emotion should be inextricably involved in the problem attests the magnitude of the task. Yet, notwithstanding many perplexities, distinguished scholars, guided by the animus of candor, have devoted untiring zeal to the elucidation of the subject, either in part or in its entirety. The history and significance of phallic worship have been exhaustively treated by authorities of recognized force and veracity; ancient writers, even as eye-witnesses, have been abundantly cited, and every vestige of phallism identified with modern times skilfully collated. It is to be regretted that the psychological coördina-

tion between evolutions of human passion apparently dissociate, should have received but passing attention, since it is in this aspect of sexual philosophy that mankind is most deeply and directly interested.

Together with close correlation, however, there are points of wide divergence in the exegesis and expression of man's sexual and spiritual nature, which require the closest study to define. It cannot be reasonably averred that even civilized man has by any means outlived his brute instincts; yet a comprehensive view of society, as to-day constituted, affords ample hope of improvement in our race—possibly tending towards the ideal evolution glowingly portrayed in the closing chapters of Wallace's "Natural Selection."

The writer of this brief consideration of the topic in hand lays no claim to special originality or force of argument, merely desiring to contribute to a discussion of phenomena which in the line of professional experience have seriously appealed to his reflection.

“Even they who worship other gods worship me, although they know it not.”—Krishna.

Taking a wide view of the matter under consideration, the mind reverts at once to that pristine epoch in the life of man, when phallicism held universal sway. We are to deal with mortal passion, in its lowest and highest forms, as conditioned by sexual impulse, and, if possible, determine the occult yet vital relation subsisting between the loftiest abstract conception of unsullied love and the purely physical, yet overmastering, desire whose carnal gratification allies us to the brute creation.

It is therefore of signal moment that we recognize the initial stages of man's development when, as history and archæological research abundantly prove, the male and female genitalia were objects of devout worship. Already had the human intellect, in its first gropings after truth, recognized the immutable law of cause and effect. The crudest observation perceived the sun to be the generative principle of vegetable life. Far back in the earliest dawn of civilization, to which in vain we strive to assign even an approximate period, the ancient fire-worshippers bowed before the great life-giving principle embodied in sunlight.

The silent, mysterious forces of nature resulting in the creation of a single plant filled the inchoate imagination with awe and reverence. Other natural phenomena inspired fear, and were to be propitiated, —here was a benignant yet all-potent manifestation of power, derived from an inscrutable source, but of so vast an import to man that his actual existence depended upon its operation. Small wonder that the earliest receptive faculty of the human mind accepted the miracle with veneration.

But there came to this primitive being, together with his undefined perception of primary causes operating in the material world, a consciousness of vivifying power in himself. He, too, through the subtle yet indubitable agency of the procreative instinct, was capable of producing life. What must have been the wondering delight imparted by that first thrilling revelation! Yet, subjective as was this earliest conception of truth, the human mind was still incapable of assimilating abstract ideas. Its concepts were related to the world only through objective phenomena, the outward eye alone being perceptive. Man was indeed religious (*religere*), in that he recognized, however imperfectly, the existence of a power, external to his proper individuality, to which he was indissolubly bound—a cognition which in sun-worship had found its first exultant expression.

Here, however, in himself, confined within the sphere of his physical activity, he became suddenly aware of a transcendent creative force, a purely subjective phenomenon, marvelous in its potency as it was mysterious in its nature, and of profoundest moment to him, since through its agency he was imbued with power to propagate his species. To his primitive thought the phallus appeared henceforth as sacredly related to the Giver of Life.

In its peculiar function the Creator was supposed to symbolize his own omnipotence, and consequently the male organ of generation was deemed in the highest degree worthy of adoration. Incapable of deeper cognition, man thus invested his procreative force with emblematic significance, seeking by the visible embodiment of the new truth, in symbols and images of various forms and characteristics, to exalt with due homage this tangible expression of Divine will. The phallus and the vulva were therefore objects of special religious rites, the former representing directly the Creator's active power and the latter the passivity of Nature.

Partaking, then, of an objective symbolism, rather than even a crude abstraction, we find that this once vital form of faith held sway over all known civilizations, to many of which modern thought is compelled to pay high tribute in estimating the origin

and progress of the world's enlightenment. Hindus, Chaldeans, Egyptians, Romans, Gauls, Teutons, Britons, and Scandinavians alike shared in phallicism, and the earliest records of mankind prove indubitably that as a symbolic faith the worship of the reproductive organs existed as an ancient institution antedating the Christian era thousands of years. Indeed, the cult is of immemorial antiquity. The oldest Assyrian and Babylonian tablets amply attest the prevalence of this pristine worship, while the temples of Thebes and Karnak bear striking evidence of its impress upon the earliest forms of religious belief in Egypt. These, however, are but later transportations of phallicism, derived from the still more venerable Hindu heritage, the oriental writings being imbued with the spirit and observance of the remotest phallic faith.

It need not surprise us to find in the Old Testament frequent and unquestionable references to this worship of the generative principle, which prevailed even over the denunciation of Judaism. Certain passages in the Pentateuch, and innumerable allusions elsewhere, leave no doubt of rites and ceremonies peculiar to phallicism, such as the practice of circumcision and the manner of invoking divine approval in taking a solemn oath.

It may well surprise us to know that Christianity

has failed to obliterate the cult, and that throughout the Middle Ages it flourished, while as late as 1780 definite traces of phallic observances were to be found in Northern Italy, and in the same century the lingering adoration of Priapus was discernible throughout Southern France. To-day the phallic symbol, *lingam*, is an object of veneration among millions of inhabitants of India; in Australasia, Polynesia, Melanesia, Abyssinia, Western Africa, and Madagascar, according to Westermarck, phallicism has existed from very ancient times, and among various Indian tribes of South America, in Japan, and in Alaska and among the Pueblo Indians rites and ceremonies of evident phallic origin or relationship are still extant.

A curious and somewhat startling reminiscence of phallicism is to be found in various symbols familiar to the Christian world, the significance of which is almost wholly ignored. Adequate and quite plausible researches have discovered, for instance, that the modern Maypole, typical of childhood's innocent merriment, is but a relic of phallic worship. So, too, the horse-shoe has been connected with the ancient emblems of the female genitalia, *yoni*, at no very distant date quite common in Great Britain and Ireland. The tender associations which surround the mistletoe are traced to Druidic and phallic cere-

monies, and even the cross, sacred symbol of Christian martyrdom, has been identified with the earliest records of phallic worship, an Assyrian relic in particular bearing the clearest evidence that the cruciform symbol typified the sacredness of love's physical expression. In like manner the obelisk, pillar, column, altar, mount, and cave have been credibly derived from pristine phallic symbolism.

It should be noted that these deductions are by no means fanciful, but the result of profound archæological research, conducted by eminent and trustworthy students and explorers. They prove conclusively the remarkable influence exerted by phallicism upon the more advanced, as well as the more primitive, races of men, and the fundamental power of that ancient faith which has enabled its symbolism, albeit greatly modified, to survive the most pronounced divergence in modern creeds which have long since discarded its observances.

The Oriental and Egyptian theogonies have been either obliterated or substantially changed in the evolution of religious thought—phallicism alone retains its hold upon the human imagination, whether on the banks of the Ganges, in African jungles, or in remote Pacific isles. When we consider that concubinage, androgeny, and polygamy are far from being extinct even in this nineteenth century, the

tenacity of phallic faith appears less remarkable.

It is not within the scope of these casual reflections to enter upon a detailed consideration of phallic worship. The theme has been considered *in extenso* by Knight, Westermarck, Kraft-Ebing, Spitzka, Irwin and other noted authorities, whose works are of the deepest interest to the student of sexual psychology and evolution.* In this rapid survey our object has been simply to show that the human genitalia, which to-day if spoken of or seen, even in effigy, bring to the cheek the blush of shame (*pudendum*), were once universal objects of adoration and the symbols of the earliest religious intuition. Furthermore, had it been advisable, it might have been shown that procreation, so far from awakening repugnance or conceived in a spirit of lust, was regarded with absolute reverence, forming the most sacred rite connected with the worship of the Creator—as is still to be witnessed among the millions of India.

With the development of Christian thought and the growth of intellectual and spiritual abstraction, the ancient phallic faith has fallen away. Man has become self-conscious, and the simple-minded ven-

*The interested reader is referred particularly to Mr. Clifford Howard's "Sex Worship" for an admirable treatment of the subject.

eration which drew its inspiration from nature alone, has been supplanted by a system of theology wherein anthropomorphic ideas prevail.

The problem presented to the seeker after psychological truth is, whether the actual tenets of religious faith and the rigid scruples of modern ethics indicate an advance or a retrogression—whether, in a word, the Zend-Avesta and Walt Whitman are not nearer truth and nature than the Westminster catechism and Martin Farquhar Tupper. We have no evidence that the complacent philosopher Diogenes was of a libidinous turn of mind; yet he is said to have openly approved the phallic rite of sexual union performed in the market-place. Indeed, the study of phallicism affords overwhelming testimony that in the earlier stages of human development there existed a paradisaal innocence, a chastity, not voluptuousness, of motive which to modern ideas is wholly inconceivable.

“Men think they know,” says Knight, “because they are sure they feel, and are firmly convinced because strongly agitated. Hence proceed that haste and violence with which devout persons of all religions condemn the rites and doctrines of others, and the furious zeal and bigotry with which they maintain their own, while, perhaps, if both were equally understood, both would be found to have the same

meaning, and only to differ in the modes of conveying it" ("The Worship of Priapus"). That the worshippers of this procreative deity discriminated between pure religion and irreverent lust, is shown by the fact that under the Roman Empire severe restrictions were imposed upon the phallic rites included in the Bacchanalian festivities, because of the licentiousness with which the temples were defiled.

"Passion is the sum-total of humanity. Without passion, religion, history, romance, art, would all be useless."—Balzac.

In entering upon a consideration of Lust, Love, and Religion, with the special view of tracing their psychical correlation, it is proper to remark that abnormal states of human passion—erotomania, satyriasis, nymphomania, auto-erotism and the like—save as passing illustrations, are excluded. At the same time it may be noted that these aberrant manifestations of the sexual instinct, to be regarded as pathological rather than psychical, are all-important in their positive assertion of the intimate bond between the procreative organs and the mind of man. A lascivious dream resulting in physical pleasure is a most convincing proof of this indissoluble relationship, not to speak of waking phenomena perhaps equally cogent in argument.

Let us turn to the early period of life in which the psychological history of the individual may be said to reveal its primal significance. Dr. T. S. Clouston, in his invaluable "Clinical Lectures on Mental Diseases," says: "I should restrict puberty, as is now done when the term is used in a scientific and physiological sense, to the initial development of the function of reproduction, to its first appear-

ance as an energy of the organism ; while I should define adolescence to denote the whole period of twelve years from the first evolution up to the full perfection of the reproductive energy. . . . The psychological change at puberty is no doubt great from childhood ; but it is inchoate and nascent ; it wants precision and conscious power ; its emotionalism is spasmodic and childish ; its sentiment wants tenderness, and its ambitions and longings are allied to castle-building in the air." "At the latter period of adolescence in the male sex," adds the author, "life first begins to look serious, both from the emotional side and in action. It is then only that childish things are put away. . . . There is a real sexual egoism, that most painful pleasure that consists of the half-conscious feeling that each person of one sex is an object of the most intense interest to each person of the opposite sex about the same age. . . . His emotional nature acquires for the first time a leaning towards the other sex that quite swallows up the former emotions. It is not yet at all under his control, fixed or definite in its aims.

"But it is in the female sex that the period of adolescence has attracted most attention. Especially among those psychological students and delineators of character, the novelists of the day. As physicians, we know that it is only then that hysteria, migraine,

and the graver functional and reflex neuroses arise. As men of the world, we know that the love-making, the flirting, the engagements to marry, and the broken hearts of the adolescents are not really very serious affairs. The cataclysms of life do not happen then."

The author here cites Gwendolen Harleth in "Daniel Deronda"—characterizing the authoress as "by far the most acute and subtle psychologist of her time"—as a remarkably truthful instance of the spell exerted by sex influence, a power that draws the heroine to an utter stranger as unerringly as the loadstone attracts the needle, throughout the fine drama acting with the irresistible force of destiny. From a thoughtful analysis of Gwendolen's mental constitution, the author draws the frank inference that "sexual intercourse should never be indulged in till after adolescence." It seems to us, however, that there is another lesson to be derived from the restless passion of this beautiful girl in whom a higher feeling is manifest.

The above quotations from a highly competent authority postulate clearly the state of mind in the young, resulting from physiological changes and consequent reflex thoughts and emotions, at a period when certain pre-determining causes and environment incline the heart and intellect to love or lust.

Few youths or maidens would confess even to themselves that their emotional natures were stirred by aught but the chastest, most unselfish desire in these years of strong, though undefined, passion. Ribot ("Psychology of the Emotions"), affirms that "like every other instinct, that of sex consists in a fixed relation between internal sensations coming from the genital organs, or tactile, visual or olfactory perceptions on the one hand, and movements adapted to an end on the other. So far as it is an instinct, it is that and nothing but that. In the immense majority of animals, and frequently in men, it does not rise above this level; in plainer words it is not accompanied by any tender emotion. The act once accomplished, there is separation and oblivion. . . . Sexual love corresponds to a higher form of evolution. Over and above instinct, it implies the addition of a certain degree of tender feeling. It is not therefore a simple emotion, even in the tolerably numerous species of animals in which it can be studied. In man, more especially in civilized man, its complexity becomes extreme." In this connection we cannot forbear quoting Herbert Spencer's philosophical analysis:

"The passion which unites the sexes . . . is habitually spoken of as though it were a simple feeling. Added to the purely physical elements of it

are first to be noticed those highly complex impressions produced by personal beauty, around which are aggregated a variety of pleasurable ideas, not in themselves amatory, but which have an organized relation to the amatory feeling. With this there is united the complex sentiment which we term affection—a sentiment which, as it can exist between those of the same sex, must be regarded as an independent sentiment, but one which is here greatly exalted. Then there is the sentiment of admiration, respect or reverence, in itself one of considerable power, and which in this relation becomes in a high degree active.

“Then comes next the feeling called love of approbation. To be preferred before all the world, and that by one admired beyond all others, is to have the love of approbation gratified in a degree passing every previous experience, especially as there is that indirect gratification of it which results from the preference being witnessed by unconcerned persons. Further, the allied emotion of self-esteem comes into play. To have succeeded in gaining such attachment from, and sway over, another, is a proof of power which cannot fail agreeably to excite the *amour propre*. Yet again, the proprietary feeling has its share in the general activity; there is the pleasure of possession; the two belong to each other.

Once more, the relation allows of an extended liberty of action. Towards other persons a restrained behavior is requisite. Round each there is a subtle boundary that may not be crossed—an individuality on which none may trespass. But in this case the barriers are thrown down, and thus the love of unrestrained activity is gratified.

“Finally, there is an exaltation of the sympathies. Egoistic pleasures of all kinds are doubled by another’s sympathetic participation, and the pleasures of another are added to the egoistic pleasures. Thus, round the physical feeling forming the nucleus of the whole, are gathered the feelings produced by physical beauty; that constituting simple attachment, those of reverence, of love of approbation, of self-esteem, of property, of love of freedom, of sympathy. These, all greatly exalted, and severally tending to reflect their excitements on one another, unite to form the mental state we call love. And as each of them is itself comprehensive of multitudinous states of consciousness, we may say that the passion fuses into one immense aggregate most of the elementary excitations of which we are capable; and that hence results its irresistible power.” (“Principles of Psychology.”)

This judicial analysis, even dissection, of the human emotions tending to create the “divine pas-

sion," besides being highly instructive, reveals the egoism, the fundamental selfishness of a sentiment generally supposed to partake of an objective, altruistic nature. It may be questioned, however, whether in its highest, noblest form there does not enter into the relation, primarily subjective though it be, a generous delight in the happiness of another, not to be obscured by the shadow of private personality.

Of sexual passion in its entirety, dealing with the subject embryologically, Ribot asserts: "Finally, it has been said that the coupling of the two sexual elements is analogous to the coupling of the two animals whence these elements are derived; the spermatozoid and the ovule do on a small scale what the two individuals do on a large one. The spermatogenic element, in directing itself towards the ovule which it is to fertilize, is animated by the same sexual instinct which guides the complete being towards the female of the same species." Delboeuf ("Revue Philosophique") states the case yet more graphically: "That girl," he says, "and that young man, in being attracted to one another, obey the will, unknown to both, of a spermatozoid, an ovule. But it may be taken as certain that this will is not unknown either to the spermatozoid or the ovule; both know what they want, and take it. To this end they give their orders to their respective brains

through the medium of the heart, and the brain obeys without knowing why. Sometimes it imagines that it has been convinced by reason and explains its whole choice to itself. At bottom it has been but an unconscious instrument in the hands of an imperceptible workman who knew both what he wanted and what he was doing."

In another passage in the work above cited, Ribot aptly observes that "sex instinct contents itself with a specific satisfaction (adducing in illustration the periodical desire of the lower animals); sexual love does not. . . . In reality, the irresistible element is the sexual instinct, and only exists in virtue of it." And with still stronger emphasis he adds: "Sexual instinct remains the centre round which everything revolves; nothing exists but through it. Character, imagination, vanity, imitation, fashion, time, place, and many other individual circumstances or social influences, give to love—as emotion or passion—an unlimited plasticity. It is the task of the novelist to describe all its various shapes, and one which they have not failed to perform."

We are considering the determining motive, the animus, which inspires the conscious *ego* in its initial response to amatory desire. The impulse, as we have seen, springs from a complexity of emotions well-nigh overmastering in their primary effect.

“Who ever loved that loved not at first sight?”

exclaims Phebe in “As You Like It,” and in Quillard’s “Proverbes sur les Femmes” we find an admirable portraiture of this *coup de foudre*. “The Latins, like the Greeks, declared that ‘love is born at first sight.’ It is difficult to explain why a glance should produce moral effects so swift, so unforeseen, so irresistible. It would seem that deep in the heart there must dwell some subtle, clairvoyant intuition regarding the object of affection, and that the first sight of the beloved one should be as an illuminating ray of light which, with the power of a magnetic force, draws us by indefinable affinities.”*

The *raison d’être* of this mysterious attraction—which, by the way, has its antithesis in repulsion—is partly elucidated in Goethe’s “Elective Affinities,” where the secret, yet indissoluble, bond between Edward and Ottilie is subtly delineated.

Whatever else inclines the human heart to love, it may be safely averred that physical charms play an important part in stimulating the sentiment of tender

* “Les Latins disaient d’après les Grecs : Ex aspectu nascitur amor. On ne saurait bien expliquer comment un regard peut produire des effets moraux, si rapides, si imprévus, si irrésistibles; mais il semble qu’il y ait au fond du cœur je ne sais quelle idée innée de l’objet qu’on doit aimer, et que le premier coup d’œil qu’on lui donne soit comme un rayon de lumière que le fait reconnaître, et comme un courant magnétique qui entraîne vers lui par indéfinissables affinités.”

passion. "No man loves," says Aristotle, "but he that was first delighted with comeliness and beauty." "Omne pulchrum amabile," whatever is beautiful is lovable, declares Proclus, and even the more ethereal doctrines of Plato exalt "the Beautiful" in its influence upon the emotion awakened by sexual attraction. Yet every lover will confess that beauty is relative, not absolute, the term being too elastic to admit of narrow interpretation, and the world is full of happy unions which a superficial observer might consider *mésalliances*.

Burton, in his "Anatomy of Melancholy," cites Plotinus: "It is worth the labor to consider well of love, whether it be a god or a devil, or passion of the mind, or partly god, partly devil, partly passion." Another ancient author calls it "the *primum mobile* of all the affections;" while Plato declares it to be "the great devil, for its vehemency and sovereignty over all other passions—boni pulchrique fruendi desiderium." Socrates affirms that love is the mean between the good and the evil, between the base and the lovely, between the mortal and immortal,* while his illustrious pupil draws a philosophic distinction between the spiritual, the human, and the carnal passions: "These three loves are classed as the

* Inter bonum et malum, inter turpe et pulchrum, inter mortale et aeternum. (Niphus Liber de Amore, Leyden, 1641.)

divine, of the contemplative ; the human, of the active ; and the animal, of the voluptuous man,"* or as it is elsewhere expressed : *Amor itaque omnis incipit ab aspectu, sed contemplativi hominis amor ab aspectu ascendit in mentem. Voluptuosi descendit in tactum.*" Finally, Lucian thus contrasts the carnal and the spiritual passions : "One love was born in the sea, which is as various and raging in young men's breasts as the sea itself, and causeth burning lust : the other is that golden chain which was let down from heaven, and with a divine fury ravisheth our souls, made to the image of God, and stirs us up to comprehend the innate and incorruptible beauty to which we were once created." Again he says, "Let me beware lest I confound filthy, burning lust with pure and divine love."

However the emotion may evade analysis, of the power—Plato's "sovereignty"—of Love there can be no question. Well sings the Mantuan bard :

"*Omnia vincit amor nos et cedamus Amori.*"

For it have men forsworn honor, virtue, crown, and princely dignity—all that can ennoble life or lend lustre to exalted station. Hieronymus pun-
gently observes : "*Si mulier potuit vincere eum qui*

* *Tres isti amores tria nomina sortiuntur; Contemplativi hominis amor divinus, Activi humanus, Voluptuosi ferinus cognominatur.* (Niphus, loc. cit.)

jam erat in paradiso, non est mirum si eos impediât
qui nondum ad paradisum pervenerunt."

What did Marc Antony,

"The triple pillar of the world transform'd
Into a strumpet's fool,"

not sacrifice to gratify his illicit passion !

"*Cleo.*—If it be love indeed, tell me how much.

Ant.—There's beggary in the love that can be reckoned.

Cleo.—I'll set a bourne how far to be beloved.

Ant.—Then must thou needs find out new heaven, new earth.

* * * *

Ant.—Let Rome in Tiber melt ! and the wide arch
Of the ranged empire fall ! Here is my space.
Kingdoms are clay ; our dungy earth alike
Feeds beast as man ; the nobleress of life
Is to do thus : when such a mortal pair

[*Embracing*]

And such a twain can do't.

* * * *

Now for the love of Love and her soft hours."

It is but an illustrious instance of the lapses from marital constancy which have been a "A Blot on the 'Scutcheon'" in many a regal history, and in the world-at-large have tainted, as with a foul miasma, the purest and sweetest of household atmospheres. We need not multiply examples, which, to a careful observer of events, will readily suggest themselves. Gladly would society claim the immunity or extenuation due to temporary aberration of intellect: the

facts leave no question of the fullest moral responsibility. If civilization and refinement mean anything in this nineteenth century, then must we regard dereliction from conjugal fidelity a flagrant reversion to barbarism.

Origen is said to have had recourse to self-mutilation rather than endure the pitiless conflict with sexual desire, and we know from history how saints and sinners have alike yielded to the tyrannizing thralldom of all-consuming passion. Nor would men abnegate the felicities of love for all their trials—as Propertius expresses it:

“ Medicine cures all human ills.
Only the lover resents the cure.”*

Or, as Emerson quotes, speaking of the higher spiritual love: “All other pleasures are not worth its pains,” and, as Publius Syrus observes: “Love is like a torch, the more it is agitated the brighter it burns.”†

Assuming, though, that, whatever be its primary source, there is a purer, more exalted, as well as a more sensual, phase of human passion in its relations to sex, how shall we discriminate? “There may be passion without love,” says Marion Crawford;

* “Omnes humanos sanat medicina dolores
Solus amor morbi non amat artificem.”

† “Amans ita ut fax, agitando ardescit majis.”

“there can be no love without passion.” Queenly Dido herself was distracted with grief in her futile ardor to possess the heart of Aeneas. Michelet, in his thoughtful work “L’Amour,” while clinging to earth—was he not a Frenchman, forsooth?—delineates here and there the more ennobling transports of his theme. Xavier de Maistre, in “Voyage autour de ma Chambre,” touches lightly, but profoundly, upon the subject in saying of the bed, “*C’est la trône de l’Amour.*” A distinguished writer, compared purity to an onion, delicately portraying the danger of love’s dalliance. We strip off husk after husk, then layer after layer, thinking to reach finally the real substance, until, behold! the substance is gone. The subtlety of the metaphor is characteristic of Hawthorne’s psychological insight. The dividing line between chaste affection and animal lust seems to be clearly drawn; yet so intimately associated are the purest and the most polluted emotions of the human mind, that the keenest observer is often baffled, and the demarkation—readily modified by heredity, temperament, and occasion—becomes well-nigh evanescent.

Exquisitely pure, exquisitely impure—such would be the characterization of many a man and woman could we but draw aside the veil that mercifully conceals from the world the thoughts and desires familiar

to private consciousness—angel and demon clasped in bitter and tireless conflict. This is the tragedy of life, surpassing in its intensity and pathos the sternest drama ever enacted, and beyond the gift of genius to portray. Let us look frankly, yet pityingly, at a few melancholy facts.

In an article in the "Alienist and Neurologist," on "Auto-Erotism," by Dr. Havelock Ellis, of London, a significant case is cited. The writer says: "A married lady who is a leader in social purity movements, and an enthusiast for sexual chastity, discovered, through reading some pamphlet against solitary vice, that she had herself been guilty of practicing one of its forms for years without knowing it. The profound anguish and hopeless despair of this woman in face of what she believed to be the moral ruin of her whole life cannot well be described."

In "Transactions of the American Association of Obstetrics," Vol. V., 1892, a contributor affirms that one of his patients, a devout church member, had never allowed herself to entertain sexual thoughts referring to men, but the sight of even trivial objects suggestive of animal passion frequently awakened in her mind erotic desires.

These cases certainly present a curious psychological study, being an eloquent commentary upon what Kaar expressively terms "Psycopathia Sex-

ualis." Dr. Ellis further quotes Madame Roland, who in "*Mémoires Particulières*" presents a vivid picture of the anguish produced on an innocent girl's mind by the doctrine of the sinfulness of erotic dreams. As an example of the power of libidinous thought, though not of specifically auto-erotic manifestations, the author cites the case of a somewhat eccentric preacher, fifty-seven years of age, who experienced the liveliest sensations of erotic pleasure in the presence of certain ladies.

The above instances illustrate the absolute despotism of the sexual instinct, even admitting a purely reflex action in the genital excitement. They assert, moreover, the perfect compatability of ardent religious emotion and a virtuous life with practical sensuality, reacting upon the moral nature with terrible force. The psycho-physiological problem involved is to determine how far the erotic phenomena are related to conscious or unrecognized thoughts of a lascivious character—whether the insidious canker of lust had not quietly been consuming the flower of chastity, and the mind become imperceptibly estranged from its natural operations.

Still more phenomenal is the fact that women have been known to be sexually excited in listening to music, or in viewing pictures, even of chaste design (Schrenck-Notzing), such women knowing

nothing of sexual relationship. An instance is cited of similar emotions being awakened upon sight of the sea, and other indications of hyperæsthesia are adduced, showing unmistakably a bewildering confusion of sexual and moral or æsthetic ideas. The importance of day-dreams has been noted in moulding the tone of thought, Hamlin Garland's "Rose of Dutcher Coolly" being quoted as representing the effect of a circus-rider upon the visionary meditations of "a healthy, normal girl at adolescence." Raffalovich alludes to the influence of solitary reveries upon the minds of persons of the same sex—"psychic onanism;" while it has been observed that amorous, even erotic, visions are frequently cherished by refined and imaginative young men and women whose outward lives are chastity itself, and who would instinctively abjure all contamination with lasciviousness or pruriency.

How, then, establish with any approach to certainty the confines of lust, love, and religion—emotions so interfused, so mutually dependent, that we cannot ignore their logical association? In one of the finest dramas in the Castilian tongue, "Don Juan Tenorio," of Ruiz Zorilla, the co-existence of lust and love in the mind of the hero is admirably depicted. So far as baser passion is concerned, the tragedy recalls at once the "Don Juan" of Byron

and Mozart's "Don Giovanni." Yet Zorilla's protagonist is at last touched to finer feeling, and in the presence of his inamorata the peccadillos of past years are shriven by the benignant influence of a transparently pure affection. Few scenes in dramatic art can equal the hero's declaration of love in the beautiful quinta whither the abducted heroine has been conveyed. Disdaining to take advantage of the situation, he pours forth his soul-felt, exquisite passion in words aglow with chaste inspiration, and of so moving an eloquence that it were beyond mortal woman to withhold the ecstatic surrender: "Love me, Don Juan, or tear my heart from my bosom, for I adore thee."*

Alas, the course of true love ran too smoothly to satisfy either fate or the exigencies of Spanish tragedy. The irate father and other nobles, to whom Don Juan's previous career is well known, enter with drawn swords; the hero stands at bay, and waving his rapier aloft cries in wild despair:

"I called to heaven, yet it heard not my cry;
Closed on me are its portals—
For my steps, then, among mortals
Shall heaven be held to answer, and not I!"†

* "Ámame ó arráncame el corazon,
Porque te adoro!"

† "Llamé al cielo y no me oyó,
Sus puertas me cierra—
Pues de mis pasos en la tierra
Responda el cielo, y no yo."

Whereupon the unhappy lover proceeds to perforate as many of the enemy as possible before yielding to their combined assault.

The close of "Daisy Miller," by Henry James, Jr., contains an instructive lesson in regard to the danger of prejudging the motive of social relations between the sexes, and cruelly ascribing lust to a perfectly wholesome, natural intercourse. It will be remembered that Daisy typifies a bright, lovely young American girl, who, secure in the consciousness of her unsullied character, is wont to set at defiance the conventionalities of life. Journeying to Rome, she accidentally forms the acquaintance of an Italian count, Giovanelli, to whom she is beholden for certain acts of courtesy, accepted with the frank *naïveté* of guileless confidence. The American colony, however, well knows that her *cavaliere servente* is a *routé* and points at the young woman the finger of virtuous scorn, considering itself scandalized. The suspicious attitude of her persecutors rouses in Daisy's mind a righteous indignation, and, in apparent obduracy, she accepts still further favors from her admirer, even visiting the Colosseum by moonlight with him alone. This last performance is regarded by her countrywomen as an unblushing escapade, and when, as a result of her imprudence, the girl is stricken with malarial fever and dies, there is

more criticism than pity bestowed upon her conduct. The scene beside the poor child's grave is a fine touch of dramatic pathos, the supposed cause of her misery being present as an unwelcome spectator.

"Giovannelli was very pale; on this occasion he wore no flower in his button-hole—he seemed to wish to say something. At last he said: 'She was the most beautiful lady I ever saw, and the most amiable;' and then he added in a moment, 'and she was the most innocent.'

"Winterbourne looked at him, and presently repeated his words, 'and the most innocent?'

"The most innocent!'"

Was ever sweeter compliment paid to American womanhood? Yet it is dismally true that Mr. James' characterization of Daisy Miller brought upon him many a gentle anathema from self-righteous philistinism. The story recalls the remark of Charlotte Brontë, in "*Vilette*," to the effect that, through a certain perversity of the mind, we sometimes take positive delight in shocking the sensibilities of those by whom we cannot in any case expect to be justly appreciated.

What shall we think of Becky Sharp? Thackeray, with a delicacy of feeling that marked true gentility of nature, withholds judgment, leaving his heroine still undefined, like a suspended chord in music:

“There she is, gentlemen: make what you will of her.”

Charles Kingsley, having been appointed lecturer on history in the University of Oxford, with the rarest modesty resigned his chair on the ground of incompetency to fill the position with the entire approval of his conscience. Not long after, meeting Froude, the scholars compared notes, agreeing that we cannot rightly ascertain the weight of historical fact—or as Kingsley instanced: “We can never know whether Mary, Queen of Scots, was virtuous or vicious.”*

In pursuing this thread of inquiry it has been our object to emphasize the responsibility resting upon those who claim an intuitive perception of character, assured that they can determine readily the complexion of human passions widely diverse in their operations and results, yet intimately conjoined through derivation from a common source—as the same spring may send forth limpid or unclean waters, according to the nature of the soil they permeate. The beautiful couplet of Gray:

“O’er her warm cheek and rising bosom move

The bloom of young Desire and purple light of Love,”

may be considered chaste or erotic as the thought is interpreted by a pure or tainted imagination. The

**cf.* Pope’s “Essay on Man,” v. 231.

form is Swinburnian, yet there is nothing whatever in common between the inspired author of the immortal "Elegy" and the very earthy writer of "Laus Veneris."

Let us for a moment breathe the air of heaven, which, like a benediction, rests upon Milton's muse. This from "Comus";

Lady.—"O, welcome pure-eyed faith, white-handed hope,
Thou hovering angel, girt with golden wings,
And thou unblemish'd form of chastity!"

* * * *

First Br.—"So dear to heaven is saintly chastity,
That, when a soul is found sincerely so,
A thousand liveried angels lacquey her,
Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt;
And, in clear dream and solemn vision,
Tell her of things that no gross ear can hear;
Till oft converse with heavenly habitants
Begin to cast a beam on the outward shape,
The unpolluted temple of the mind,
And turns it, by degrees, to the soul's essence,
Till all be made immortal: but when lust,
By unchaste looks, loose gestures, and foul talk,
But most by lewd and lavish act of sin,
Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
The soul grows clotted by contagion,
Imbodies, and imbrutes, till she quite lose
The divine property of her first being.
Such are those thick and gloomy shadows damp,
Oft seen in charnel vaults and sepulchres,
Lingering and sitting by a new-made grave,
As loth to leave the body that it loved,

And link'd itself, by carnal sensuality,
To a degenerate and degraded state."

* * * *

Lady.—

—"To him that dares

Arm his profane tongue with contemptuous words
Against the sun-clad power of chastity,
Fain would I something say;—yet to what end?
Thou hast nor ear, nor soul, to apprehend
The sublime notion, and high mystery,
That must be uttered to unfold the sage
And serious doctrine of virginity;
And thou art worthy that thou should'st not know
More happiness than this thy present lot."

Yet although imbued with ideal beauty, she who is "chaste as morning dew" is fated to experience at times the throes of human passion. Beneath her placid thoughts and vestal innocence there steals upon the heart of every true woman an undertone of restless, indefinable longing not to be dispelled by the pleasing accidents of social amenities, the glow of intellectual pursuits, the delight in æsthetic taste and loveliness, or saintly consecration of life to the happiness of others.

At the close of adolescence, although not so completely developed, the youth is fully conscious of sexual desire, if he has not learned to sin. With the more innocent maiden, however, there is a compensating realization of her natural mission derived from physiological phenomena wholly alienate from masculine experience. The new truth comes to her

at puberty. She observes with tremulous awe the access of the catamenia and their periodical recurrence; she notes with wondering pride the fair development of the mammæ, and the soft comeliness of feminine contours hitherto undreamed. But why this marvelous change? Only the instinct of maternity can solve the mystery. Long since, in the infant household of dollhood, had she unconsciously disclosed the innate purpose of her existence in the world of humanity. Now, the living reality dawns upon her half shrinking, half rapturous imagination. As yet she dimly discerns the tremendous significance of the revelation, but with growing intelligence the word "mother" acquires new tenderness and sanctity.

Coequal with physical evolution there is a corresponding psychical development. The moral nature assumes a deeper and more serious tone; the mental faculties are stimulated, and the emotions rendered more receptive and acute. The nascent woman (to whom the soul of manly chivalry should pay the tribute of breathless homage) becomes more reticent and sensitive. As a frightened wood-bird seeks the recesses of the forest, she withdraws into the chapel of her virgin meditations, while dreams of poetic happiness, or vague, melancholy questionings throng upon her fancy.

Can there be any doubt as to the determining cause of this impressive transformation? Is there, save in sexual influences, any explanation of so momentous a departure from simple girlhood? Yet precisely at the moment when she requires the most vigilant protection, this sacred and commanding object of mankind's noblest solicitude is exposed to the greatest danger. The conventionalities of society, the yearning assiduity of parental care, and the ethical influences of religious faith are alike powerless to control the inherent force of sexual passion. The victim of man's concupiscence, through a finer, more delicate organization, may possess compunctions of conscience—the professional seducer has absolutely none. Under the spell of irresistible desire, enhanced by the persuasive sophistries of her pseudo-lover, the child—for child she is at heart—is ushered into the labyrinthine, yet entrancing, mysteries of passionate *abandon*. Even while secure in maidenly innocence there lurked within the shadows of her being the fell tempter Occasion. “*Laudem virtutis necessitati damus*,” says Quintilian: only the merest accident, born of inscrutable fate, sufficed to achieve her moral ruin. The unconscionable Gaul, with characteristic cynicism, states the case in the pitiless terms of a professional rake.

But there is an obverse as well as a reverse to the shield. We have cited only the situation in which obvious lust is the ruling impulse of sexual gratification, especially in the man, though it were an egregious error to suppose the woman blameless, she being clearly *particeps criminis* and in equity fully culpable. There are violations of rigid virtue in history and literature, wherein the moral lapse appeals to the sympathetic imagination so strongly, and is so softened by romantic affection, as to wear the color of innocence rather than of conscious guilt. The story of Francesca da Rimini and her lover, Paolo—whom the great Dante apotheosized in the “Inferno” and Silvio Pellico honored with dramatic genius, and whose pathetic fate has struck a responsive chord in the hearts of poets and painters of a later day, illustrates, we had almost said, the chastity of sexual desire. Compassionate her, mortal man and woman!—this beautiful girl, doomed to an alliance with one whose character and physical deformity filled her with abhorrence, for which there was no solace save in the ardent love of the younger brother, Paolo, to whom she had confided the tenderest passion of her soul. That they should have been discovered and yielded their blissful young lives to appease the wrath of Giovanni seems the natural atonement for a love like theirs.

Dante. — Quanti dolce pensier, quanto disio
Menò costoro al doloroso passo!

—i tuoi martiri
A lagrimar mi fanno triste e pio.

Francesca. — —Nessun maggior dolore,
Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
Nella miseria;

* * * *

Noi leggevamo un giorno per diletto
Di Lancillotto, come amor lo strinse.
Soli eravamo e senz' alcun sospetto,

Per più fiate gli occhi ci sospinse
Quella lettura, e scolorocci il viso:
Ma solo un punto fu quel che ci vinse.

Quando leggemmo il disiato riso
Esser baciato da cotanto amante,
Questi, che mai da me non fia diviso,

La bocca mi baciò tutto tremante:

* * * *

Quel giorno più non vi leggemmo avante.

Dante. — Mentre che l'uno spirto questo disse,
L'altro piangeva sì, che di pietade
I'venni men così com' io morisse;

E caddi come corpo morto cade.

The entire passage is thus rendered by Leigh
Hunt:

Francesca. — “ ‘ Love that soon kindleth in a gentle heart,
Seized him thou look'st on for the form and face,
Whose end still haunts me like a rankling dart.

Love, which by love will be denied no grace,
Gave me a transport in my turn so true,
That lo! 'tis with me even in this place.

Love brought us to one grave. The hand that slew
Is doomed to mourn us in the pit of Cain.'
Such were the words that told me of those two.

Downcast I stood, looking so full of pain
To think how hard and sad a case it was,
That my guide asked what held me in that vein.

His voice aroused me; and I said, 'Alas!
All their sweet thoughts, then, all the steps that led
To love, but brought them to this dolorous pass'—

Then turning my sad eyes to theirs I said,
Dante. 'Francesca, see—these human cheeks are wet—
Truer and sadder tears were never shed.

But tell me. At the time when sighs were sweet,
What made thee strive no longer?—hurried thee
To the last step where bliss and sorrow meet?'

Francesca.—'There is no greater sorrow,' answered she,
'And this thy teacher here knoweth full well,
Than calling to mind joy in misery.*

But since thy wish be great to hear us tell
How we lost all but love, tell it I will
As well as tears will let me it befall.

One day we read how Lancelot gazed his fill
At her he loved, and what his lady said.
We were alone, thinking of nothing ill.

*—"This is truth the poet sings,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier
things." —"Locksley Hall."

Oft were our eyes suspended as we read,
And in our cheeks the color went and came;
Yet one sole passage struck resistance dead.

'Twas where the lover, moth-like in his flame,
Drawn by her sweet smile, kissed it. O! then he
Whose lot and mine are now for aye the same,

All in a tremble on the mouth kissed *me*.
The book did all. Our hearts within us burn'd
Through that alone. That day no more read we.'

While thus one spake, the other spirit mourn'd
With wail so woful, that at his remorse
I felt as though I should have died—I turned

Stone-stiff; and to the ground fell like a corse.' "

Thus closes the Fifth Canto of Dante's "Inferno"—as moving a picture of human misery and Christian compassion as literature contains. It was fitting that the author of "Gli mie Prigione" and Leigh Hunt ("The Story of Rimini,") were touched to feeling utterance by this fourteenth century tragedy, and that the art of Ary Scheffer, Cabanel, and George Frederic Watts should have been inspired by imaginative portraiture of the hapless lovers.

In Goethe's "Faust"—that masterly microcosm of mortal existence, as influenced by the subtlest phases of passion—we have a profoundly interesting delineation of earthly love awakened by sexual instinct. It must be borne in mind, however, that the poet's hero is by no means actuated by sensual mo-

tives alone, being of refined and scholarly tastes far removed from grosser sensual desire. As the drama develops, lustful temptation, typified in Mephistopheles, gains irresistible ascendancy over Faust's finer nature. Yet his early question regarding Margaret's age, and the caustic reply of his evil genius: "Why, you talk like a Frenchman," indicate clearly enough the presence of an underlying animal motive, of which the lover is at first insensible. With consummate art he is wooed from the first tender imaginings of an aspiring soul, animated by a lofty aim and generous impulse, to the more ardent visions of sexual conquest—from the musings in Margaret's bed-chamber:

—"Here lay the child when life's fresh heavings
 Its tender bosom first made warm,
 And here with pure, mysterious weavings
 Enwrought itself the god-like form,"

to the maturer purpose of his sensual zeal.

And now contrast with the restless longings and fervid desire of Faust the ineffably sweet emotions of Margaret, warmed by the most exquisite affection, mantled by virgin innocence, and suffusing every maidenly fancy with the grace and beauty of "love's young dream." Whatever carnal motive may have actuated her lover, the mind and heart of Margaret are unsullied by touch of impurity. Even when fate

has visited upon her the bitterest consequences of her innocent surrender, her imagination is still untainted by consciousness of guilt. "It was so sweet!"* she exclaims, as from the depths of her young spirit's inscrutable agony wells the memory of purest love. There is nothing of the Magdalen's remorse, nothing which to her limpid thoughts suggests pollution—only the impassioned, rather than passionate, sense of a shattered dream and the awful shadow of a pitiless retribution. Surely no more heart-breaking sorrow could attend the gentlest aspirations of a human soul.

Far otherwise is it with him whose earthier motives have obscured the radiance of his original impulse. The struggle has been deep within him. There were moods of exaltation when immortal Love possessed his glowing fancy, and his heart was stirred by loftier purpose, as when he is touched to pensive longings:

"I leave behind me field and meadow,
 Veiled in the dusk of holy night
 Whose ominous and awful shadow
 Awakes the better soul to light.
 To sleep are lulled life's wild desires,
 The hand of passion lies at rest,
 The love of God the bosom fires,
 The love of man stirs up the breast.

* Es war so süß.

"When in my study-chamber nightly
 The friendly lamp begins to burn,
 Then in the bosom thought beams brightly,
 Homeward the heart will then return.
 Reason once more bids passion ponder,
 Hope blooms again and smiles on man:
 Back to youth's rills he yearns to wander—
 Ah, to the source where life began."

And in the exalted scene in the forest and the Invocation,

"Spirit sublime, thou gav'st me all I asked"—

and the sudden revulsion of feeling in which Faust's loathing of Mephistopheles is expressed,

"—and then
 Thou gav'st me this companion"—

are eloquently portrayed the phases of a spiritual conflict as mysterious in its origin and portent as it is inexorable. As the drama proceeds, the subtlety of psychological affinity between natural sexual desire of possession and monstrous indifference to moral lapse for which there is no expiation, is thrillingly depicted. Taken in its entirety, this most powerful drama of modern times may be said to typify the strength, the passion, and the tenderness of the sexual instinct—the intensity of longing, however undefinable, the pathos, and the mastery by which man and woman are mutually controlled,

together with the irrefragible ties by which purity and sensuality, love and desire, are forever bound.

“ Men that do noble things all purchase glory,
 One man for one brave act hath proved a story;
 But if that one ten thousand dames o’ercame,
 Who would record it, if not to his shame?
 ’Tis far more conquest with one to live true
 Than every hour to triumph over new.”

—Thomas Campion, Circa 1617.

Few records of passion derived from sexual pre-science have awakened so profound a human interest as the love history of Abelard and Héloïse—the one a saint, founder of the famous Paraclete, and the keenest thinker, as well as ablest theologian of the twelfth century, the other, his pupil, a nun whose goodness, beauty, and refinement of feeling compel reverent interest. The love-songs of Héloïse, replete with the tenderest devotion, and the clandestine correspondence of the ill-fated pair, exhale the divinest essence of human affection, blended with the purest, loftiest aspirations that can sway the soul. Even after the fearful fate which befell Abelard—unspeakable mutilation at the hands of his enemies—the heroic love of Héloïse shines forth as perhaps the most illustrious instance of woman’s unwearying constancy. This assuredly was love, not lust, indicating rather a psychical divergence than correlation, since only the memory of the highest sexual

bliss remained to them. The tragedy derives special importance as indicating the mediation of the religious sentiment in moulding the sexual impulse.

Probably no writer of the romantic school of the last century attained greater celebrity than Jean Jacques Rousseau. The eccentricities of his mind and the open immorality of his life are to be deplored; yet the surpassing brilliancy of his style, his affluence of sentimental enthusiasm, and the poetic loveliness with which he invested nature, claim for him an undying place in literature. It is impossible to peruse the fervid pages of "*La Nouvelle Héloïse*" without a sense of over-mastering genius, and throughout his works one may find here and there transcendently sweet and inspired thoughts. Yet this rare intellectual quality and delicacy of imaginative insight were allied to the grossest sensuality, his own "*Confessions*" unblushingly declaring that he could scarcely mingle in the society of women without sensations of the most lascivious eroticism—after which the scathing commentary of Sir Joseph Acton, in his exhaustive work upon "*The Reproductive Organs*," seems amply merited.

It is difficult to deal with Byron. The writer recalls the case of a young woman, whose life and conversation precluded all suspicion of aught but the most maidenly chastity, whom he surprised one day

convulsed with innocent (?) laughter over the drolleries of "Don Juan." Truly none but a dullard can fail to be enlivened by the inimitable wit and grace of innuendo, as well as magical charm of lyric beauty, which characterize what the critic Taine claimed to be the finest production of Byron's muse. It should be remembered that the poet's loftiness of pride and consciousness of intellectual supremacy rendered him wholly indifferent to the impressions which his conduct, naturally enough, left upon others. It is highly improbable that his life was that of the libertine assumed by his detractors—any more than that Charles Lamb is to be credited with the excesses implied in "Confessions of a Drunkard." There is a brave defiance in certain mental attitudes which foils us in our analysis of character, and if any thoughtful observer can believe in the depravity of the essayist who spent the larger portion of his days in rigid service in the august East India House, or in the chronic debaucheries of the poet who, between "Hours of Idleness," 1807, and his latest verses just previous to his death, 1824: in that brief period of creative power produced all those marvelous compositions—if any can believe in these delinquencies of genius, we cannot follow him. Certainly, immoral though Byron may have been, the author of the third canto of "Childe Harold"

sinned like a god, and silences irreverent aspersion. But there are passages throughout his works, and the entire lyric "Maid of Athens," which reveal a celestial rather than a demoniacal inspiration.

Let us examine for a moment this perplexing phase of the poet's thought. In "Laus Veneris" Swinburne is seductively erotic. There is a vein of youthful corruption in these apparently conscious offenses against love and purity, a willful and perverse animalism which even the divine afflatus of Poesy cannot wholly purge, nor the semblance of ennobling passion transfigure. In the incomparably beautiful chorus in "Atalanta in Calydon," the Hymn to Venus, the poet soars into the empyrean upon the wings of sweetest song.

"We have seen thee, O Love, thou art fair; thou art goodly,
O Love;

Thy wings make light in the air as the wings of a dove.
Thy feet are as winds that divide the stream of the sea;
Earth is thy covering to hide thee, the garment of thee.
Thou art swift and subtle and blind as a flame of fire;
Before thee the laughter, behind thee the tears of desire;
And twain go forth beside thee, a man and a maid;
Her eyes are the eyes of a bride whom delight makes afraid;
As the breath in the buds that stir is her bridal breath:
But Fate is the name of her; and his name is Death.

"For an evil blossom was born
Of sea-foam and the frothing of blood,
Blood-red and bitter of fruit,
And the seed of it laughter and tears.

And the leaves of it madness and scorn;
 A bitter flower from the bud,
 Sprung of the sea without root,
 Sprung without graft from the years.

“The web of the world was untorn
 That is woven of the day or the night,
 The hair of the hours was not white
 Nor the raiment of time overworn,
 When a wonder, a world’s delight,
 A perilous goddess was born;
 And the waves of the sea as she came
 Clove, and the foam at her feet,
 Fawning, rejoiced to bring forth
 A fleshly blossom, a flame
 Filling the heavens with heat
 To the cold white ends of the north.*

STROPHE.

Chorus.—“O Love, our conqueror, matchless in might,
 Thou prevailest, O Love, thou dividest the prey;
 In damask cheeks of a maiden
 Thy watch through the night is set.
 Thou roamest on the sea;
 On the hills, in the shepherds’ huts thou art;
 Nor of deathless gods, nor of short-lived men,
 From thy madness any escapeth.

ANTISTROPHE.

Unjust, through thee, are the thoughts of the just;
 Thou dost bend them, O Love, to thy will, to thy spite.
 Unkindly strife thou hast kindled,
 This wrangling of son with sire,
 For great laws, throned in the heart,
 To the sway of a rival power give place,
 To the love-light flashed from a fair bride’s eyes.”

—Whitelaw, trans.

* *cf.* The *Antigone* of Sophocles:

And in air the clamorous birds,
 And men upon earth that hear
 Sweet articulate words
 Sweetly divided apart,
 And in shallow and channel and mere
 The rapid and footless herds,
 Rejoiced, being foolish at heart.
 For all they said upon Earth,
 She is fair, she is white like a dove,
 And the life of the world in her breath
 Breathes, and is born at her birth;
 For they knew thee for mother of love,
 And knew thee not mother of death.

"What had'st thou to do being born,
 Mother, when winds were at ease,
 As a flower of the springtime of corn,
 A flower of the foam of the seas?
 For bitter thou wast from thy birth,
 Aphrodite, a mother of strife;
 For before thee some rest was on earth.
 A little respite from tears,
 A little pleasure of life;

* * * *

—"but thee
 Who shall discern or declare?
 In the uttermost ends of the sea
 The light of thine eyelids and hair,
 The light of thy bosom as fire
 Between the wheel of the Sun
 And the flying flames of the air?
 Wilt thou turn thee not yet nor have pity . . .
 Have mercy, mother!"

It is hard to reconcile with so noble an invocation, instinct with impassioned fervor, the lurid erotism of Swinburne's earlier verse.

But what shall we make of Walt Whitman—that esoteric eruption of all known natural and supernatural forces, fish, flesh, and fowl, thunderbolts and lapping of gentle waters, entrancing music of the spheres and terrifying discords shrieking from the nether regions—all cast pell-mell into the witches' cauldron? Is this the primitive he-goat, adorable symbol of ancient Priapus, become incarnate in the nineteenth century offspring of man? Who shall restrain the sexual fury of this fierce desire? We are told that the chaotic medley "Leaves of Grass" is the god-like genius of the universal and divine; that Homer and Skakspere and Milton are weak—this is strong. Yes, too strong, even rank and smelling to high heaven, we are tempted to reply. Yet softly; this titanic utterance we know hurtles through our bewildered senses from the lips and heart of one whose life was *sans peur et sans reproche*, whose daily relations with fellow-men were singularly pure, and whose self-sacrificing spirit knew no limit in its yearning affection for the lowliest semblance of humanity. We know, moreover, that even this ferocious animalism appealed to men of letters of the highest distinction, to whom, one would have supposed, Whitman's

conceptions of the nature and office of the art of poetry must have been wholly repellant. We will recall one of his sincerest admirers, the poet Browning, who himself wrote in "Women and Roses:"—

"Deep as drops from a statue's plinth,
The bee sucked in by the hyacinth,
So will I bury me while burning,
Quench like him at a plunge my yearning;
Eyes in your eyes, lips on your lips!
Fold me fast where the cincture slips,
Prison all my soul in eternities of pleasure,
Girdle me for once! But no—the old measure
They circle their rose on my rose-tree."

A similar sensual craving, although differing in sex and motive, occurs in the Provençal, thus rendered by Swinburne:—

"Nay, slay me now; nay, for I will be slain,
Pluck thy red pleasure from the teeth of pain,
Break down thy vine ere yet grape-gatherers prune,
Slay me ere day can slay desire again!
Ah God, ah God, that day should be so soon!"

Browning—to quote from Colin A. Scott again—expressing this feminine subserviency more delicately, says:

"Be a god and hold me
With a charm!
Be a man and hold me
With thine arm!

“Teach me, only teach Love!
 As I ought,
 I will speak thy speech, Love,
 Think thy thought—

“Meet, if thou require it,
 Both demands,
 Laying flesh and spirit
 In thy hands.”

We are dealing now with one of the subtlest phenomena of human passion, in which the danger of an erroneous judgment is enhanced by vital differences in the point of view, according to individual consciousness and interpretation. Other passions or emotions—love and hate, hope and fear, egoism and altruism and the like—are more or less tangential to one another, or, as Emerson says of ill-assorted companionships, they “touch as spheres.” Here, however, there is a psychological medium in which the physical and emotional elements are fused, and precise comprehension is baffled. “When the sex passion becomes divorced from the expression of true love,” says Dr. Luther Gulick, “and is used as an end in itself—the production of pleasure—then the higher capacity for love fades away. . . . The person who cultivates passion as an end loses the capacity for love in all of its higher forms. . . . Impurity strikes at the very root of all love and blights all the love life of the individual.” There is no *argu-*

mentum ad hominem to aid us in elucidating the mystery through whose instrumentality the most diverse, the most fleeting and enduring sensibilities of body, soul, and intellect are imperceptibly commingled. We have cited, for instance, a truly erotic transport of Browning, capable of the most thoughtless misconstruction. We know from the "Love Letters," graciously given to the world as a radiant exemplar of all that is sweetest and noblest in true love, that his sentiments were of the most exalted, reverential nature, comparable only with those of his rare and spiritual wife.

One poet, above all others, smote the deepest chords of human passion as with an angel hand. In the purifying alembic of Shelley's etherealized imagination nothing could remain sullied. His delicate spirit, attuned to the subtlest vibrations of human emotion, now soaring into celestial realms of fancy, now palpitating with mortal feeling, could abide only the unstained and noble.* It is well to linger over these stanzas in "The Revolt of Islam," wherein the breath of purest genius is exhaled and sexual desire is transfigured.

*Speaking of the properties of flame, methought Shelley's poetry emitted a purer light than almost any productions of his day, contrasting beautifully with the fitful and lurid gleams and gusts of black vapor that flashed and eddied from the volumes of Lord Byron.—Hawthorne. "Earth's Holocaust"
—*Mosses from an Old Manse*.

"The autumnal winds, as if spell-bound, had made
 A natural couch of leaves in that recess,
 Which seasons none disturbed, but, in the shade
 Of flowering parasites, did spring love to dress
 With their sweet blooms the wintry loneliness
 Of those dead leaves, shedding their stars whene'er
 The wandering wind her nurselings might caress;
 Whose intertwining fingers ever there
 Made music wild and soft that filled the listening air.

"We know not where we go, or what sweet dream
 May pilot us through caverns strange and fair
 Of far and pathless passion, while the stream
 Of life our bark doth on its whirlpools bear,
 Spreading swift wings as sails to the dim air:
 Nor should we seek to know, so the devotion
 Of love and gentle thoughts be heard still there
 Louder and louder from the utmost ocean
 Of universal life, attuning its commotion.

"To the pure all things are pure! Oblivion wrapt
 Our spirits, and the fearful overthrow
 Of public hope was from our being snapt,
 Though linkèd years had bound it there; for now
 A power, a thirst, a knowledge, which below
 All thoughts, like light beyond the atmosphere,
 Clothing its clouds with grace, doth ever flow,
 Came on us, as we sate in silence there,
 Beneath the golden stars of the clear azure air:—

"In silence which doth follow talk that causes
 The baffled heart to speak with sighs and tears,
 When wildering passion swalloweth up the pauses
 Of inexpressive speech;—the youthful years
 Which we together passed, their hopes and fears,

The blood itself which ran within our frames,
 That likeness of the features which endears
 The thoughts expressed by them, our very names,
 And all the wingèd hours which speechless memory claims,

“ Had found a voice:—and, ere that voice did pass,
 The night grew damp and dim, and, through a rent
 Of the ruin where we sate, from the morass,
 A wandering Meteor by some wild wind sent,
 Hung high in the green dome, to which it lent
 A faint and pallid lustre; while the song
 Of blasts, in which its blue hair quivering bent,
 Strewed strangest sounds the moving leaves among;
 A wondrous light, the sound as of a spirit's tongue.

“ The Meteor showed the leaves on which we sate,
 And Cythna's glowing arms, and the thick ties
 Of her soft hair which bent with gathered weight
 My neck near hers, her dark and deepening eyes,
 Which, as twin phantoms of one star that lies
 O'er a dim well move though the star reposes,
 Swam in our mute and liquid ecstasies,
 Her marble brow, and eager lips, like roses,
 With their own fragrance pale, which Spring but half uncloses.

“ The Meteor to its far morass returned:
 The beating of our veins one interval
 Made still; and then I felt the blood that burned
 Within her frame mingle with mine, and fall
 Around my heart like fire; and over all
 A mist was spread, the sickness of a deep
 And speechless swoon of joy, as might befall
 Two disunited spirits when they leap
 In union from this earth's obscure and fading sleep.

"Was it one moment that confounded thus
 All thought, all sense, all feeling, into one
 Unutterable power, which shielded us
 Even from our own cold looks, when we had gone
 Into a wide and wild oblivion
 Of tumult and of tenderness? or now
 Had ages, such as make the moon and sun,
 The seasons and mankind, their changes know,
 Left fear and time unfelt by us alone below?

"I know not. What are kisses whose fire clasps
 The failing heart in languishment, or limb
 Twined within limb? or the quick dying gasps
 Of the life meeting, when the faint eyes swim
 Through tears of a wide mist boundless and dim,
 In one caress? What is the strong control
 Which leads the heart that dizzy steep to climb
 Where far over the world those vapours roll
 Which blend two restless frames in one reposing soul?

"It is the shadow which doth float unseen,
 But not unfelt, o'er blind mortality,
 Whose divine darkness fled not from that green
 And lone recess, where lapped in peace did lie
 Our linkèd frames, till from the changing sky
 That night and still another day had fled;
 And then I saw and felt."

Could the most exacting realism ask more than
 this? Yet so essentially chaste is the treatment of
 the theme, so tenderly affectionate, so imbued with
 religious feeling, that we cannot compare with Shel-
 ley's fine emotion, the meretricious vapidity of Bal-

zac, Gautier, and Zola—not to mention the horde of lesser erotists to whom the poet's *spirituel* could by no possibility appeal.* Indeed, save in Michelet's more philosophical treatise "L'Amour," the Gallic mind appears well-nigh incapable of the most refined sentiment concerning "the divine passion." The national conscience seems expressed in the brutalism "*Chaque femme a son quart d'heure.*" Other peoples have progressed, or made some headway in behalf of chastity and honor—the Gaul alone remains true to his hereditary *lâcheté*; indeed, the latest degeneracy, blazoned in Offenbach and the damnatory *can-can*, perhaps, surpasses all previous manifestations of innate depravity. One has, moreover, but to glance at the Salon exhibitions of the present day, to perceive that art, as well as manners and literature, is under the baneful spell of this lascivious *penchant*. The comparatively venial amours of Abelard and Héloïse, the era of Chateaubriand and Cousin, and the purer conceptions of artistic genius once the glory of Paris, have yielded to a demoralized, morbid taste for ephemeral concupiscence and attainment, devoid of ennobling passion. Is it surprising that the nation bends like grass to the sickle before the avenging blade of Teuton virility?

* Shelley—"a beautiful and *ineffectual angel*, beating in the void his luminous wings in vain."—Matthew Arnold, "*Essays in Criticism.*"

We are ascending from the gross and material, whether in form or sentiment, to the spiritual and ideal, as embodied in human utterance, and still hover upon the borderland of two dominating passions—lust and love. We long for a draught of clear mountain air, the balmy odor of upland pines, and murmur of crystal streams, that we may, while yet in quest of the eternal verities of life, fearlessly pursued, forget the mists that shroud the valley's deeps, and for a space unfold the flower of our being to the golden air. Here is a beam of clear sunlight from which the motes that haunt the lowlands have been filtered by the winds of heaven. We quote from James Lane Allen's "Aftermath:"—

"Although we have now been two months married, I have not yet captured the old uncapturable loveliness of nature which has always led me and still leads me on in the person of Georgiana. I know but too well that I never shall. The charm in her which I pursue, but never overtake, is part and parcel of that ungraspable beauty of the world which forever foils the sense while it sways the spirit—of that elusive, infinite splendor of God which flows from afar into all terrestrial things, filling them as color fills the rose. Even while I live with Georgiana in the closest of human relationships, she retains for

me the uncomprehended brightness and freshness of a dream that does not end and has no waking.

This but edges yet more sharply the eagerness of my desire to enfold her entire self into mine. We have been a revelation to each other, but the revelation is not complete ; there are curtains behind curtains, which one by one we seek to lift as we penetrate more deeply into the discoveries of our union. Sometimes she will seek me out and, sitting beside me, put her arm around my neck and look long into my eyes, full of a sort of beautiful, divine wonder at what I am, at what love is, at what it means for a man and woman to live together as we live. Yet, folded to me thus, she also craves a still larger fulfilment. Often she appears to me hovering on the outside of a too solid sphere, seeking an entrance to where I really am. Even during the intimate silences of the night we try to reach one another through the throbbing walls of flesh—we but cling together across the lone, impassable gulfs of individual being.”

Here, at least, are no shadows to obscure the portraiture of perfect love—the very arcana of so elevated a passion are made holy.

“ It is too clear a brightness for man’s eye;
Too high a wisdom for his wits to find;
Too deep a secret for his sense to try;
And all too heavenly for his earthly mind;

It is a grace of such a glorious kind
 As gives the soul a secret power to know it,
 But gives the heart nor spirit power to show it.

“It is of heaven and earth the highest beauty,
 The powerful hand of heaven and earth's creation,
 The due commander of all spirits' duty,
 The Deity of angels' adoration :
 The glorious substance of the soul's salvation;
 The light of truth that all perfection trieth,
 And life that gives the life that never dieth.”

—Nicholas Breton, 1601.

“O Love, they wrong thee much
 That say thy sweet is bitter,
 When thy rich fruit is such
 As nothing can be sweeter.
 Fair house of joy and bliss
 Where truest pleasure is,
 I do adore thee;
 I know thee what thou art,
 I serve thee with my heart,
 And fall before thee.”

—Capt. Tobias Hume, 1605.

“Thou all sweetness dost enclose,
 Like a little world of bliss;
 Beauty guards thy looks, the rose
 In them pure and eternal is:
 Come, then, and make thy flight
 As swift to me as heavenly light.”

—Thomas Campion, circa, 1617.

The love-poems and madrigals of the Elizabethan era are replete with delicate sentiments such as these.

But we must still linger amid the gloom and mystery of the unknown land we have sought to explore. Art, too, has found expression of the sexual impulse we have seen exemplified in literature, though in less subtle gradations of fleshly and spiritual desire, since the æsthetic faculty is influenced rather by outward, visible impressions than by imaginative reflection. Let us illustrate.

There is a famous painting by Correggio, known to all lovers of art, and frequently awakening ignorant enthusiasm among the chastest and most guileless of men and women—the beautiful “Io,” chiefly familiar through the upturned countenance and gleaming shoulders enclosed in circular setting. A connoisseur instantly detects the face of Jupiter barely looming in the background of deep chiaroscuro. The blissful languishment of the fair goddess might be, and is to those unacquainted with art or Grecian mythology, the rapture of a simple kiss: in reality, as the full painting reveals, the panting thrill that illumines the countenance of Io, portrays the most exquisitely voluptuous sensation known to flesh and blood—the “speechless swoon of joy” which accompanies the human orgasm.

Yet this same Correggio paid inspired tribute to

the religious sentiment and the world of art in the most spiritual portraitures of Saints and types of beatific joy and innocence scarcely surpassed by Raphael. How reconcile the purely devotional with the impurely sensual? Ah, but is Io's sweet rapture impure? This is the psychological and sexual problem.

The paintings of Guido Reni represent the extremes of voluptuous desire and the exalted emotion which produced the most touchingly pathetic "*Mater Dolorosa*"—"And there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother."

The divine Raphael gave to religion its sublimest masterpiece of art, the Sistine Madonna, and Titian produced one of the noblest conceptions of Christ—the mistresses of both are immortalized through their portraits. Kaulbach illustrated with rare delicacy of feeling the chastest and sweetest of German lyrics; yet he prostituted his genius by one of the most lecherous fancies that ever polluted canvas.

These examples of æsthetic incongruity might easily be multiplied; and the same coexistence of refinement and vulgarity finds abundant instances in the history of mankind. In a Cleopatra, as in a Messalina, we perceive the depths of riotous indulgence to which lust can descend; Pericles, the young Augustus of his age, who brought the highest glory

to Athenian art and letters, took for a paramour the enchanting Aspasia: the Egyptian courtesan has been glowingly celebrated by an essentially chaste mind—that of Shakspeare—while the Athenian lovers received their apotheosis through the genius of Landor, one of the rarest spirits of the century. The supremely beautiful description of Eve in “Paradise Lost” shows how gladly even Puritan Milton rendered homage to feminine charms, and the triumph of the courtesan Phryne over the Areopagus to whom her radiant loveliness was exposed, further attests man’s uncontrollable delight in the irresistible graces of woman.

But we need not revert to the past to emphasize sexual enchantment. In recent years the most brilliant and the most god-fearing of men and women have succumbed to illicit infatuation prompted by inordinate sexual desire—phenomenal lapses, in England as well as in America, having shaken the fabric of society to its foundations. They affirm incontestably that, in striving to comprehend the psychological nature of the *vita sexualis*, the highest culture, the brightest intellectual gifts, and the most distinguished environment are intimately associated with clearly atavistic degeneration as determining influences in the display of human passion. Fortunate is it for the stability of society and the per-

manency of virtue, that, as we confidently believe and as overwhelming evidence confirms, the derelictions from purity of life and character bear but a slight ratio to the general community. Yet we must beware of confounding ignorance with true chastity. An observer of social relations will readily perceive that, even among the virtuous and circumspect, there are frequent indications of private, personal thoughts which in their last analysis belie outward unsusceptibility to aught unclean.

Prudery may be not inaptly defined as the affectation of innocence, therefore logically implying guilt—somewhere “the little rift within the lute” that mars the natural melody of the soul, and suggests a consciousness of evil meditations. There is a maidenly modesty, instinctive in its nature, that shrinks from the contemplation of nudity, or the perusal of insidious literature: there is also an abnormal, exaggerated disparagement of truth, especially as expressed in art, which is but self-confession. The former blushes, and is silent—the latter does not change color, and raves. A few illustrations will suffice to make the matter clear.

“The sinful painter drapes his goddess warm.

Because she still is naked, being dressed:

The god-like sculptor will not so deform

Beauty, which limbs and flesh enough invest.”

—Emerson.

The "Bacchante" episode in the pseudo-"Athens of America" is a case in point. The figure cannot be regarded as an especially appropriate ornament for a great public library; but the contention which arose touching its nudity is laughable enough to an intelligent lover of art or to a student of human nature. Worse still, in its gross ignorance and absolute admission of impure thoughts, was the action of certain women who sounded the cymbals and beat the tom-toms in the Salvation Army (*sic*), to whose beatific vision certain cherubic emblems in Omaha were offensive as harlots. We have heard, too, of a stultified proposal to drape statuary in the Art Institute of Toledo, and the writer has been an ocular witness of the substitution of the phallic* fig-leaf for the innocent genitalia of "The Adoring Genius" in a prominent western city. A more remarkable publication of prudery, however, of which he was also personally cognizant, occurred in that same New England Athens some years ago. Together with thousands of others daily passing close by, he watched the gradual completion of the Crispus Attucks' Memorial. The cylindrical shaft—itsself a phallic emblem—being raised to its position, the workmen pro-

*In Phallicism the fig tree was regarded with special veneration--the tri-lobed leaf symbolizing the male reproductive organs, and the fruit, from natural resemblance, the uterus.

ceeded to finish the cap-stone. Probably very few minds conceived any suggestiveness in the column as it stood; but when that fatal accessory assumed, under the very eyes of a nineteenth century public, the perfect semblance of the human prepuce, there was consternation mingled with smiles and blushes. The self-conscious refutation of pure-thoughtedness culminated in the removal of the convicting cap-stone not long after its adjustment, and its replacement by a pointed terminal, the completed shaft of granite, now looking for all the world like a gigantic, but chaste, and well-sharpened slate-pencil.

So much for the true motives of an era of civilization which imagines itself somehow — possibly because of the fancied perfection of modern culture — allied to Arcadian innocence and simplicity.

“Wherever God erects a house of prayer,
The Devil always builds a chapel there.”

— Defoe.

We have thus far considered the aspects of sexual phenomena in their more secular relations, from the far remote epoch when Phallicism was actually a prevalent religion to the differentiated worship of the present day, through whose impress the ancient faith, among the more progressive nations of the world, has been supplanted by the thought and manners of Christianity. We have, naturally in vain, sought to find some clew to the mystery attending the manifestations of concupiscence and continent exercise of the amatory instinct, either co-existent or distinct, discovering only their mutual origin in the domination of the sexual principle. It is now opportune to consider the bearings of lust and love upon the religious sentiment, in many minds associated only with “whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report.” We shall see whether the most devout adherence to ecclesiastical tenets and ethical prescriptions necessarily confers immunity from carnal desires and practices.

Recurring to primitive history we have in Phallicism the earliest relation of the sexual principle to

the Creative Energy symbolized in this ancient faith. Passing from the original Chaldean and subsequent evolutions of oriental theogony to the pure pantheism of Greek mythology, we find that, while the basic worship of Priapus still reverts to Assyrian and Babylonian conceptions of Deity, an elaborate system of lesser divinities, ruled by a celestial hierarchy, has been grafted upon the earlier, simpler belief. It was characteristic of Greek thought to invest even the ordinary affairs of life with tutelary supervision, so that the multitude of gods and goddesses formed a goodly company of major and minor deities.

“Men read into nature,” observes Dr. Gulick, “what they find in themselves. The gods of any people are of necessity constructed from such ideals as exist in the lives of the people. Reproduction in all higher forms of life is sexual. So by parity of reasoning many of their gods must be related to sexual matters.

“It is most natural then that the gods having to do with fertility and reproduction should in almost all lands have been of special prominence, and when we remember that in the worship of any god his special power or function is usually recognized in some definite way, we can readily see how sexual practices may easily have become identified with the worship of these deities.” . . . “A distinction,” he

adds, "should be made between those religions in which these practices were done as part of the worship, symbolizing in some way the special attributes of the god, and those in which there was mere license." These remarks apply equally to the rites of the earlier Phallic faith and the worship of Priapus in Greece and Italy descended therefrom. But since the procreative instinct in man typified the highest conception of dignity and power, the exercise of sexual functions on the part of a deity filled the Greek mind with veneration. Consequently innumerable *liaisons*, as we see in Ovid's "Metamorphoses," came to establish a legendary mythology of many and intricate relationships. The amours of Zeus himself were innumerable, the deity resorting to various disguises for purposes of amatory conquest—as Lily says: "Did not Jupiter transform himself into the shape of Amphintrio to embrace Alcmaena; into the form of a swan to enjoy Leda; into a bull to beguile Io; into a shower of gold to win Danae?" And Burton in his "Anatomy of Melancholy" remarks: "Jupiter himself was turned into a satyr, a shepherd, a bull, a swan, a golden shower, and what not for love."

What does the world not owe to that sensuous and refined, rather than sensual, pantheism! It fired the genius of Sophocles, and Aeschylus, and

gave us their immortal trilogies; it reared to its divinities temples whose classic grace and beauty have never been approached, and, in forms of majestic proportion and entrancing loveliness, exhausted the divine art conceived in inspired visions and rendered imperishable by the sculptor's chisel. Ill indeed could mankind spare the heroism of the "Antigone," the nobility of the Parthenon—grandly impressive in its very ruins, the Faun of Praxiteles, the Adoring Genius and the Venus of Milo—even in her mutilated form beautiful beyond comparison. We can smile at and forget the royal escapades of deities who could so inspire their worshippers: had they been even worse, Art must have been still more enriched.

The enchanted vales of Arcady had scarce exhaled their last lingering perfume, when Judaism, unconscious of art or beauty, proclaimed the pitiless ethics of the Mosaic Law. No more shall Jove, descending from Olympus girt with light and majesty, wander incognito among the unsuspecting maidens of his desire; no more Pluto break the heart of poor Proserpine, nor Apollo pursue his Daphne or leave his longing Clytie to weep away her sorrow by the stream. "Thou shall not covet"—and the stern interdiction was, with the advent of Christianity, made doubly terrible: "But I say unto you, that whoso-

ever looketh on a woman to lust after her"—the epitaph of Olympian prerogative.

"What is the organic relation in the individual between sex and religion: is there such a thing?" asks Dr. Gulick, "We note first that at puberty and immediately following it is the time of crisis in the moral nature. We have shown that the great bulk of those who are to become criminals, become so during the later adolescent period. We have shown that the years from ten to eighteen were the years of the chief accession to the criminal ranks in the whole of the United States.

"Another crisis in the moral nature is shown by a study of conversion. Our tables show that if one is to become a Christian, the probability of his becoming so between the ages of twelve and twenty are as three and one-half to one. In other words, that for every person who becomes a Christian before twelve or during all the years after twenty, three and one-half become Christians between twelve and twenty. We showed that not only in the Christian religions, but more or less in all religions, there is a recognition of this dawning of the religious life at puberty. The Episcopal, and many other churches select this time for confirmation."

Elsewhere he says: "God seems to have selected this period as peculiarly a period of religious suscep-

tibility. . . . Circumcision is a rite largely practised at this period. It typifies the new life, the new birth, the change from boyhood to manhood."

This religious receptivity in early life has been frequently noted by careful observers. It seems as though the agitation caused by a mysterious access of vitality, and the consciousness of physical changes of momentous, though unknown, import, predisposed the troubled mind to seek repose within the sheltering guidance of religion. Weir ("Religion and Lust"), boldly asserts that "young married men and women, who are in perfect sexual health, who have not experienced religion before marriage, seldom give this emotion a single thought until late in life, when both *libido* and *vita sexualis* are on the wane or are extinct." The author aptly remarks in this connection: "Voltaire cynically, though truthfully, observes that when woman is no longer pleasing to man, she then turns to God."

The most remarkable phenomena attesting the relationship between sexual feeling and religious emotion occur in psycho-pathological conditions. Kraft-Ebing calls attention to the fact: "All through the history of insanity the student has occasion to observe the close alliance of sexual and religious ideas; 'an alliance,' says Spitzka, 'which may be partly accounted for because of the prominence

which sexual themes have in most creeds, as illustrated in ancient times by the phallus worship of the Egyptians, the ceremonies of Friga Cultus of the Saxons, the frequent and detailed reference to sexual topics in the Koran and several books of the kind, and which is further illustrated in the performances which, to come down to a modern period, characterize the religious revival and camp-meeting.' "

It is noteworthy that these accesses of religious devotion are wont to affect young girls and unmarried women more than the opposite sex. The secret of this fact is aptly suggested by Weir: "Men, owing to their greater freedom, soon learn the difference of the sexes, and the delights of sexual congress. Women, hedged in by conventionalities and deterred by their innate passivity, remain, for the most part, in ignorance of sexual knowledge until their marriage."

Religious conviction in all ages has been the most powerful incentive to human action. We have but to recall the history of the Crusades and the contentions which for centuries convulsed the distracted factions of the Church in Western Europe, culminating in the Reformation, to understand the power of fanatic zeal when operative under the sanction of Religion. In diversified forms, from the dancing mania of the Middle Ages to the melan-

choly hallucinations of witchcraft, the influence of religious thought upon the imagination has been manifested. "An overstrained bigotry," says Hecker, "is, in itself, and considered in a medical point of view, a destructive irritation of the senses, which draws men away from the efficiency of mental freedom, and peculiarly favors the most injurious emotions. Sensual ebullitions, with strong convulsions of the nerves, appear sooner or later, and insanity, suicidal disgust of life, and incurable nervous disorders, are but too frequently the consequences of a perverse, and, indeed, hypocritical zeal, which has ever prevailed, as well in the assemblies of the Maenades and Corybantes of antiquity, as under the semblance of religion among the Christians and Mohammedans."

The Convulsionnaires, whose demonomania lasted until the close of the eighteenth century, were addicted to the most extravagant vagaries when under the spell of religious excitement. "The grossest immorality found, in the secret meetings of the believers, a sure sanctuary, and, in their bewildering devotional exercises, a convenient cloak." The English Methodists forming the sect of Jumpers are said to have indulged in practices similar to those of the Convulsionnaires. "There is no doubt," observes Clouston, "that the religious instinct of men

being one of the deepest and most central parts of his psychological constitution, and often cultivated and developed from childhood in a way that few of his other faculties are, when perverted causes intense general emotional disturbance." Among the cases of insanity adduced by the same author, three of women are cited in which religious monomania was directly traceable to amenorrhœa or other functional uterine disturbance, showing clearly the intimate relation between the physical phenomena of the *vita sexualis* and the melancholic or delusional states of mind in which they terminate. Among the delusions of melancholia in women are instanced those of being pregnant, being raped, having venereal disease, and being a man.

In this connection Kraft-Ebing notes "how intense sensuality makes itself manifest in the clinical history of many religious maniacs; the motley mixture of religious and sexual delusions that is so frequently observed in psychosis — *e. g.*, in maniacal women who think they are or will be the mother of God, resulting from abnormal religio-sexual feeling."

"Of all the insanities of the pubescent state," says Weir, "erotomania and religious mania are the most frequent and the most pronounced. Sometimes they go hand in hand, the most inordinate sensuality being coupled with abnormal religious zeal.

A young lady of my acquaintance, whose conduct has given rise to much scandal, is, at times, a reincarnate Messalina, while at other times she is the very embodiment of ethical and religious purity."

Another instance is cited of a young girl, in whom the *vita sexualis* was about to be established, who, becoming religiously insane, "had delusions in which she declared that she was in heaven and sitting at the right hand of God. She declared this over and over again, while shamelessly guilty of manustupration!" Sexual, cruel self-punishment, self-castration, and even self-crucifixion have been known to result from delusional religio-mania, a remarkable instance of the latter being given by Berghierri, showing the close correlation of religious emotion and sexual desire in psychopathic individuals — "The man in question, who had been intensely sensual, manufactured a cross, nailed himself to it, and ingeniously managed to suspend himself and cross from the window of his sleeping apartment."

The asceticism enjoined by the Roman Catholic Church among the priesthood and those assuming the celibate, as one might naturally suppose, has often been productive of sexual aberrations. The nun Blanbekin was distressed to know what had become of the circumcised foreskin of Christ; in an ecstasy of ungratified *libido*, St. Catharine of Genoa

would frequently cast herself on the hard floor of her cell, crying: "Love! love! I can endure it no longer;" St. Armelle and St. Elizabeth were troubled with *libido* for the child Jesus, while an old prayer is quite significant: "Oh, that I had found thee, Holy Emanuel; oh, that I had thee in my bed to bring delight to body and soul! Come and be mine, and my heart shall be thy resting-place" (Kraft-Ebing).

Francis Parkman is authority — and there can be none better — for the statement that nuns coming to America during the Colonial period were often seized with religio-sexual frenzy. Of Marie de l'Incarnation he says: "She heard in a trance a miraculous voice. It was that of Christ, promising to become her spouse. Months and years passed, full of troubled hopes and fears, when again the voice sounded in her ear, with assurance that the promise was fulfilled, and that she was, indeed, his bride. Now ensued phenomena which are not infrequent among Roman Catholic female devotees, when unmarried, or married unhappily, and which have their source in the necessities of a woman's nature. To her excited thought, her divine spouse became a living presence; and her language to him, as recorded by herself, is of intense passion. She went to prayer, agitated and tremulous, as if to a meeting with an earthly lover. 'Oh, my Love,' she exclaimed, 'when shall I em-

brace you? Have you no pity on the torments that I suffer? Alas! alas! my Love, my Beauty, my Life! Instead of healing my pain, you take pleasure in it. Come, let me embrace you, and die in your sacred arms! ' "

"The historian remarks," says Weir, from whom we quote, that "the 'holy widow,' as her biographers call her, is an example, and a lamentable one, of the tendency of the erotic principle to ally itself with high religious excitement and enthusiasm." Parkman says later that "some of the pupils of Marie de l'Incarnation also had mystical marriages with Christ; and the impassioned rhapsodies of one of them being overheard, she nearly lost her character, as it was thought she was apostrophizing an earthly lover." A curious instance of perversion in religious sexual feeling is the case of St. Veronica, who, according to Friedrich, was so enamored of the divine lion symbolizing St. Mark that she took a lion whelp to her bed, fondled it, kissed it, and allowed it to suck her breasts.

To come down to our day, we are only too familiar with the "clerical errors" of those whose religious zeal has served but as a mask to disguise the most pronounced sensuality, one case especially having not long since been reported from the Pacific coast which, in its harrowing features, vividly recalled the story

of Hester Prynne and her sanctimonious pastor, in "The Scarlet Letter."

The above instances fairly establish the fact that, widely dissimilar as appear the motives which originate religious emotion and sexual desire, and divergent as may be their psychical operations, there subsists between them an occult yet indissoluble bond. Probably, could we know the secret history of many a rigid adherent to church doctrines and observances, we should find that there is little occasion to scrutinize the records of remote times and places to discover what, there is every reason to believe, exists in our midst. It may be permissible in the writer to record in proof of this latter assertion a case, narrated to him by the broken-hearted lover, in which the sentiments of sexual desire and indubitable love were tragically interwoven.

A young and beautiful girl, daughter of a clergyman in one of our large Eastern cities, whose education, social position, and amiable qualities of mind and heart endeared her to her family and friends, was betrothed to a most worthy gentleman, state assayer, and greatly respected in the community. The engagement elicited congratulations from a host of friends; the day of marriage was fixed, and apparently only happiness awaited the expectant pair, their mutual affection being genuine. Out of that

clear sky burst the thunderbolt; a fortnight before the appointed wedding-day, that saint-like young girl — teacher of a Sunday-school class and noted for her enthusiasm in religious and charitable work — with every token of remorse confessed that, deeply as she loved her *fiancé*, her conscience would not permit her to marry him undeservingly: in a word, for a year past she had maintained illicit relations with another man, though with no thought of marriage. She therefore implored her lover to forget her, humbly asking his forgiveness. . . . The poor fellow was too horror-stricken to realize his full calamity. As if pursued by the Furies he fled to the Black Hills, where in a few years he amassed a considerable fortune. His spirit seemed entirely broken, and he smiled bitterly at the government bonds he drew from his pocket. He was now about starting for Venezuela, to engage in placer mining.

“It is decreed in God’s great will,
That all the heart of man doth fill
With joy he must resign.”*

But the misery depicted on that care-worn face and his acknowledged hopelessness of closing that lethal wound are not easily forgotten. Truly it is as La

* “Es ist bestimmt im Gottes Rath
Dass man vom liebsten was man hat
Muss scheiden.”

Rochefoucauld says, "Nos passions ne cessent qu'avec la vie."

It is indeed a chilling reflection that all the love and solicitude parental yearning can bestow, all that the most refined religious influences can offer, all that the most cultivated associations can accomplish, in one fateful moment may be obliterated in presence of an overwhelming *libido*. There is no room for ethical reasoning, indeed oftentimes no consciousness of wrong but only Margaret's "Es war so Süß!" the egoism of passion absorbing all other considerations. Whether the lapse be wholly voluntary, or a surrender to insinuating persuasion, it is evident that for the time being the natural promptings of conscience are silenced. It would furthermore appear to an observer of sexual corruption among church members, that the finer and more sensitive the organization, the greater the danger of moral obliquity, coarser natures being either unsusceptible to the emotions occasioned by concupiscent, or, if confronted by them, capable of effectual resistance. This coincides with the general law of compensation governing society, but is none the less lamentable.

“ True love is that which ennobles the personality, fortifies the heart, and sanctifies existence.” — Amiel.

“ Love may be found in the heart of an anchorite; never in the heart of a libertine.” — Legouv  .

“ *Eppur si muove*, ” as Galileo dared assert in presence of the heinous Inquisition. Yes, the world does move, burdened as it is with sin and sorrow and the myriad silent tragedies that find no expression among men. We have dwelt upon the darker side of human passion, linking lust with love, and candidly admitting their fundamental dependence upon the sexual instinct. Yet no philosopher can deny that, under the beneficent influences of a mighty faith whose glory is that it is founded upon Love, a nobler trust and purer morals have been diffused among mankind. Other systems of religion have held their votaries captive through the imagination — it was reserved for Christianity to touch the heart of man. And from that generous heart, attuned to finer feeling, pulsating with the kindest, tenderest emotions, every day and every hour somewhere a ray of purest love goes forth to illumine the darkness of skepticism. Not a hamlet is there throughout the land but shelters some gentle affection, however obscure, that one day, perhaps to-morrow, shall make

the desert of its solitude "rejoice and blossom as the rose."

In an early essay Emerson touches gracefully upon this rustic passion: "All mankind love a lover. The earliest demonstrations of complacency and kindness are nature's most winning pictures. It is the dawn of civility and grace in the coarse and rustic. The rude village boy teases the girls about the school-house door; — but to-day he comes running into the entry, and meets one fair child disposing her satchel; he holds her books to help her, and instantly it seems to him as if she removed herself from him infinitely, and was a sacred precinct. Among the throng of girls he runs rudely enough, but one alone distances him; and these two little neighbors, that were so close just now, have learned to respect each other's personality. Or who can avert his eyes from the engaging, half-artful, half-artless ways of school-girls who go into the country shops to buy a skein of silk or a sheet of paper, and talk half an hour about nothing with the broad-faced, good-natured shop-boy. In the village they are on a perfect equality, which love delights in, and without any coquetry the happy, affectionate nature of woman flows out in this pretty gossip. The girls may have little beauty, yet plainly do they establish between them and the good boy the most agreeable, confiding

relations, what with their fun and their earnest, about Edgar, and Jonas, and Almira, and who was invited to the party, and who danced at the dancing-school, and when the singing-school would begin, and other nothings concerning which the parties cooed. By and by that boy wants a wife; and very truly and heartily will he know where to find a sincere and sweet mate, without any risk such as Milton deplores as incident to scholars and great men."

Again the poet-philosopher says: "But be our experience in particulars what it may, no man ever forgot the visitations of that power to his heart and brain, which created all things new;* which was the dawn in him of music, poetry, and art; which made the face of nature radiant with purple light, the morning and the night varied enchantments; when a single tone of one voice could make the heart bound, and the most trivial circumstance associated with one form is put in the amber of memory; when he became all eye when one was present, and all memory when one was gone; when the youth becomes a watcher of windows, and studious of a glove, a veil, a ribbon, or the wheels of a carriage; when no place is too solitary, and none too silent, for him who has richer company and sweeter conversation in

* Compare the awakening of Elsie Venner's soul through the revelation of her love.

his new thoughts, than any old friends, though best and purest, can give him; for the figures, the motions, the words of the beloved object are not like other images written in water, but, as Plutarch said, 'enamelled in fire,' and make the study of midnight.*

"In the noon and the afternoon of life we still throb at the recollection of days when happiness was not happy enough, but must be drugged with the relish of pain and fear; for he touched the secret of the matter, who said of love,—

'All other pleasures are not worth its pains';

and when the day was not long enough, but the night, too, must be consumed in keen recollections; when the head boiled all night on the pillow with the generous deed it resolved on; when the moonlight was a pleasing fever, and the stars were letters, and the flowers ciphers, and the air was coined into song; when all business seemed an impertinence, and all the men and women running to and fro in

* In vacancy my life did move,
My heart was sterile nothingness;
Thou lookedst on me, sweet my love—
A universe thy look did bless!

"Era mi vida el lóbreo vacío,
Era mi corazón la estéril nada,
Pero me viste tu, dulce amor mío,
Y créome un universo tu mirada."
—Fray Luis de Leon.

the streets, mere pictures. . . . Passion beholds its object as a perfect unit. The soul is wholly embodied, and the body wholly ensouled.

‘Her pure and eloquent blood
Spoke in her cheeks, and so distinctly wrought,
That one might almost say her body thought.’

Romeo, if dead, should be cut up into little stars to make the heavens fine. Life, with this pair, has no other aim, asks no more, than Juliet, — than Romeo. . . . That which is so beautiful and attractive as these relations must be succeeded and supplanted only by what is more beautiful, and so on for ever.”

This fine rapture, so eloquently portrayed by Emerson — who has not felt it? Who believes that it has perished or that it can ever die? We have left the noisome morass of lust, and stand upon the blessed heights of purer, nobler feeling. Granted that the sexual impulse is still present, the emotions it awakens are sublimated by a more ethereal insight and a more unearthly sense of the beautiful.

Shakspeare, in the interviews between Lorenzo and Jessica, draws, as ever with a master hand, the picture of this exalted mood, kindled by the flame of holy love :—

‘*Lor.* How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank !
Here will we sit and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears; soft stillness and the night
Become the touches of sweet harmony.

Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven
 Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold.
 There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
 But in his motion like an angel sings,
 Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubin:
 Such harmony is in immortal souls;
 But, whilst this muddy vesture of decay
 Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it."

And the cloying happiness of the moment is perhaps
 reflected in Jessica's pensive confidence :

"I am never merry when I hear sweet music,"

Private, however, as is the passion of pure love in
 its intensity, and reserved and personal as are its
 sanctities, through bonds of kindred sympathy we
 are enabled to feel the beauty of the emotion in
 others, regardless of race and clime. Never was un-
 dying love more nobly and touchingly expressed
 than in that marvelous creation, the Taj Mahal,* at

* The history and associations of the Taj are entirely poetic. It is a work inspired by Love and consecrated to Beauty. Shah Jehan, the Selim of Moore's poem, erected it as a mausoleum over his queen, Noor Jehan — 'the Light of the World.' She is reputed to have been a woman of surpassing beauty, and of great wit and intelligence. Shah Jehan was inconsolable for her loss, and has immortalized her memory in a poem, the tablets of which are marble, and the letters jewels:—for the Taj is poetry transmuted into form, and hence, when a poet sees it, he hails it with the rapture of a realized dream. Few persons, of the thousands who sigh over the pages of "Lalla Rookh," are aware that the Light of the Harem was a real personage, and that her tomb is one of the wonders of the world. . . . Did you ever build a Castle in the Air? Here is one brought down to earth, and fixed for

Agra, the last tribute of Shah Jehan to his favorite wife. It is a dream of beauty wrought in purest marble, every sculptured detail, every fretted ceiling and airy arabesque, every jewelled niche and lace-like lattice of which seems instinct with memorial homage. What must have been that lover's depth of affection! what must have been the woman, to shelter whose sacred dust was reared the fairest edifice on Earth! To associate with the perennial fragrance of a veneration such as that the noisome miasma of grosser thought, born of mere sexual desire, were profanation.

"I have just come across a statement that stern men, overpowered by the sight of it, have been known to burst into tears. We have seen it. Do not expect me to attempt a description of it, or to try to express my feelings. There are some subjects too sacred for analysis, or even words, and I know that there is a human structure so exquisitely fine, or unearthly, as to lift it into this holy domain."—Andrew Carnegie, "Round the World."

The tendency to philosophical thought and delicious languor of meditative reverie peculiar to orien-

the wonder of ages; yet so light it seems, so airy, and, when seen from a distance, so like a fabric of mist and sunbeams, with its great dome soaring up, a silvery bubble, about to burst in the sun, that, even after you have touched it, and climbed to its summit, you almost doubt its reality."—Bayard Taylor. "India, China and Japan."

talism, together with the seductive charm of natural loveliness amid which life was spent, predisposed the minds of dwellers in the East to love of the Beautiful, to reverential emotions, and amatory visions. Hindu and Persian poetry are permeated with delicacy of feeling and refined expression of sentiment. The "Rose Garden" of Sádi reflects, at times sententiously, this poetic interpretation of Life and Love:

"Wide is the space twixt him who clasps his love,
And him whose eyes watch for the door to move."*

To a criticism of his sweetheart on the part of his royal master, the lover replies proudly:

"O King! It is requisite to survey the beauty of Laila from the windows of the eye of Majnun in order that the mystery of the spectacle may be revealed to you."

"That pearl is from a mine unknown to thee,
That only bears a stamp thou canst not see,
The tale of love some other tongue must tell,
All our conjectures are but phantasy."

The Persian poets, indeed, often reveal this lofty conception of love, as refined as it is ardent and imaginative. "The "Shah-Namah" of Firdusi contains a striking episode portraying the love of Rudabah and Zal:

* In expectation of his beloved's approach.

(*Rudabah*) "I am agitated with love like the raging ocean,
 Whose billows are heaved to the sky.
 My once bright heart is filled with the love of Zal;
 My sleep is broken with thoughts of him,
 My soul is perpetually filled with my passion;
 Night and day my thoughts dwell upon his countenance."

Being chided by her attendants, who deem Zal unworthy of so fair a prize, she answers with spirit :

"You may call him as you please, an old man or a young;
 To me he is the room of heart and soul,
 Except him, never shall any one have a place in my heart."

The lovers meet at last ; and Rudabah greets the young warrior :

"Welcome, thou brave and happy youth!
 The blessing of the Creator of the world be upon thee!
 On him who is the father of a son like thee!
 And destiny ever favor thy wishes!
 May the vault of heaven be the ground thou walkest on!
 The dark night is turned into day by thy presence!"

And Zal replies :

"O thou that sheddest the mild radiance of the moon,
 The blessing of heaven and mine be upon thee!
 How many nights hath cold Arcturus beholden me,
 Uttering my cry to God, the Pure,
 And beseeching the Lord of the universe
 That he would vouchsafe to unveil thy countenance before
 me!"

The sequel is a most engaging picture of true and passionate, yet dignified, devotion.

Probably in all literature there exists no transcript of human love quite so tender in sentiment and of so ethereal a quality as the "Vita Nuova" of Dante. It is the very flower and fragrance of the poet's soul, called into being in rapturous childhood, nourished and watered with his tears through all the trials and sorrows of later experience, and shedding its lingering aroma upon the closing pages of "that mediæval miracle of song" to which Dante's solemn years were consecrated. Listen to this homage to Beatrice:

"Dice di lei Amor: Cosa mortale"—

Love saith concerning her. "How chanceth it
That flesh, which is of dust, should be thus pure?"
Keen, gazing always, he makes oath: "Forsure,
This is a creature of God till now unknown."
She hath that paleness of the pearl that's fit
In a fair woman, so much and not more;
She is as high as Nature's skill can soar;
Beauty is tried by her comparison.
Whatever her sweet eyes are turned upon,
Spirits of love do issue thence in flame,
Which through their eyes who then may look on them
Pierce to the heart's deep chamber every one,
And in her smile loves image you may see;
Whence none can gaze upon her steadfastly. —Rosetti.

"Negli occhi porta la mia donna Amore"—

My lady carries love within her eyes;
All that she looks on is made pleasanter;
Upon her path men turn to gaze at her,

And whom she greeteth feels his heart to rise,
 And droops his troubled visage, full of sighs,
 And of his evil heart is then aware:
 Hate loves, and pride becomes a worshipper.
 O women he'p to praise her in somewise.
 Humbleness, and the hope that hopeth well,
 By speech of hers into the mind are brought,
 And who beholds is blessed oftenwhiles.
 The look she hath when she a little smiles
 Cannot be said or holden in the thought;
 'Tis such a new and gracious miracie.

—Rosetti.

“Tanto gentile e tanto honesta pare”—

So gentle and so modest doth appear
 My lady when she giveth her salute,
 That every tongue becometh, trembling, meek;
 Nor do the eyes to look upon her dare.
 Although she hears her praises, she both go
 Benignly vested with humility;
 And like a thing come down, she seems to be,
 From heaven to earth, a miracle to show,
 So pleaseth she whoever cometh nigh,
 She gives the heart a sweetness through the eyes,
 Which none can understand who doth not prove.
 And from her countenance there seems to move
 A spirit sweet and in Love's very guise,
 Who to the soul, in going, sayeth: “Sigh!”

—C. E. Norton.

“Oltre la sfera che più larga gire”—

Beyond the sphere which spreads to widest space
 Now soars the sigh that my heart sends above;
 A new perception born of grieving Love

Guideth it upward the untrodden ways.
 When it hath reached unto the end, and stays,
 It sees a lady round whom splendors move
 In homage; till, by the great light thereof
 Abashed, the pilgrim spirit stands at gaze.
 It sees her such that when it tells me this
 Which it hath seen, I understand it not,
 It hath a speech so subtle and so fine.
 And yet I know its voice within my thought
 Often remembereth me of Beatrice:
 So that I understand it, ladies mine. —Rosetti.

So the child Beatrice Portinari became transfigured in Dante's fervent imagination; nor does the sacred image of her whom he loved so passionately forsake his gentle thoughts until spiritualized and rendered immortal in "Il Paradiso." Scarce does literature record a loving constancy like this, a tender adoration which years could not diminish, which inspired with beatific visions the poet's secluded reverie, and illumined the lonely sorrows of exile.

Widely different, yet touched by the pathos of true love, may be cited, in illustration of our theme, the deep emotions which stirred the bosom of forlorn Sappho, of whom Swinburne speaks feelingly, alluding to

"The small dark body's Lesbian loveliness
 That held the fire eternal."

Of the fragments of Sappho's verse which have come down to us the "Hymn to Venus" is best

known, containing much of the fervor of more modern lyrics of this nature, and set to a music all her own. There is a girlish chiding in the poem, mingled with reverential awe, which captivates the heart, so that we lament the loss of that which fate has withheld from us.

"O fickle-souled, deathless one, Aphrodite,
Daughter of Zeus, weaver of wiles, I pray thee,
Lady august, never with pangs and bitter
Anguish affray me.

But hither come often, as erst with favor
My invocations pitifully heeding,
Leaving thy sire's golden abode, thou camest
Down to me speeding.

* * * *

Come to me, then, loosen me from my torment,
All my heart's wish unto fulfilment guide thou,
Grant and fulfil! And an ally most trusty
Ever abide thou." —Walhouse.

Far finer is the passion of Elizabeth Barrett Browning — pure Greek in imagination, yet filled with the spirit of our century, and in her own refined yet glowing transports of woman's devotion expressing the highest, purest quality of Saxon love. This, for instance :

LIFE AND LOVE.

"Fast this Life of mine was dying,
 Blind already and calm as death,
 Snowflakes on her bosom lying,
 Scarcely heaving with her breath.

Love came by, and having known her
 In a dream of fabled lands,
 Gently stooped and laid upon her
 Mystic charm of holy hands;

Drew her smile across her folded
 Eyelids, as the swallow dips;
 Breathed as finely as the cold did,
 Through the locking of her lips.

So when Life looked upward, being
 Warmed and breathed on from above,
 What sight could she have for seeing
 Evermore—but only Love."

It is the modern version of Cupid and Psyche—
 Love waking the Soul, as in the lovely group of
 Canova. But it is in "Sonnets from the Portu-
 guese"—a modest fiction to conceal her identity—
 that Mrs. Browning's love, as well as genius, finds its
 noblest utterance. The key to her exalted mood lies
 in such verses as these :

"If thou dost love me let it be for naught
 Except for love's sake only—

* * * *

But love me for love's sake, that evermore
 Thou may'st love on through love's eternity."

Here are a few of these beautiful inspirations of her muse, from the "Sonnets:"

XXVII. "My own beloved, who hast lifted me
 From this drear flat of earth where I was thrown,
 And, in betwixt the languid ringlets, blown
 A life-breath, til the forehead hopefully
 Shines out again, as all the angels see,
 Before thy saving kiss! My own, my own,
 Who camest to me when the world was gone,
 And I who looked for only God, found *thee*!
 I find thee, I am safe, and strong, and glad.
 As one who stands in dewless asphodel,
 Looks backward on the tedious time he had
 In the upper life, so I with bosom-swell,
 Make witness here between the good and bad,
 That Love, as strong as Death, retrieves as well.

XXXVIII. "First time he kissed me he but only kissed
 The fingers of this hand wherewith I write;
 And ever since, it grew more clean and white,
 Slow to world-greetings, quick with its 'Oh, list,'
 When the angels speak. A ring of amethyst
 I could not wear here plainer to my sight,
 Than that first kiss. The second passed in height
 The first, and sought the forehead, and half missed,
 Half falling on the hair. Oh, beyond meed!
 That was the chrism of love, which love's own crown,
 With sanctifying sweetness did precede.
 The third upon my lips was folded down.
 In perfect, purple state; since when, indeed,
 I have been proud and said 'My love, my own,'

XXI. "Say over again, and yet once over again,
 That thou dost love me. Though the word repeated

Should seem 'a cuckoo-song,' as thou dost treat it,
 Remember, never to the hill or plain,
 Valley and wood, without her cuckoo strain
 Comes the fresh Spring in all her green completed.
 Belovèd, I, amid the darkness greeted
 By a doubtful spirit-voice, in that doubt's pain
 Cry, 'Speak once more—thou lovest!' Who can fear
 Too many stars, though each in heaven roll,
 Too many flowers, though each shall crown the year?
 Say thou dost love me, love me, love me — toll
 The silver iterance!—only minding, Dear,
 To love me also in silence with thy soul.

XIX. "The soul's Rialto hath its merchandize,
 I barter curl for curl upon this mart,
 And from my poet's forehead to my heart
 Receive this lock which outweighs argosies,—
 As purple black as erst to Pindar's eyes
 The dim purpureal tresses gloomed athwart
 The nine white Muse-brows. For this counterpart,
 The bay-crown's shade, Belovèd, I surmise,
 Still lingers on thy curl, it is so black!
 Thus, with a fillet of smooth—kissing breath,
 I tie the shadows safe from gliding back,
 And lay the gift where nothing hindereth;
 Here on my heart, as on thy brow, to lack
 No natural heat till mine grows cold in death.

XXIII. "Then love me, love me, Love! look on me—
 breathe on me!
 As brighter ladies do not count it strange,
 For love, to give up acres and degree,
 I yield the grave for thy sake, and exchange
 My near sweet view of Heaven for Earth with thee!

XLIII. "How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.

I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
 My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
 For the ends of Being and Ideal Grace.
 I love thee to the level of every day's
 Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight.
 I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
 I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.
 I love thee with the passion put to use
 In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
 I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
 With my lost saints,—I love thee with the breath,
 Smiles, tears, of all my life!—and, if God choose,
 I shall but love thee better after death."

Say now if this be pure — if in these lofty expressions of fondest, ideal, yet real, love, there be aught save the holiest passion that can sway a human soul! The world knows the Brownings' wedded life; all was gloriously fulfilled — so far as mortality permits, without a shadow, those rare twin-spirits standing in clear light, whose radiance, intensified by the glow of genius, shed grace and beauty upon men, and bade them reverence the majesty of Love. What must have been the parting, if only for a space! tenderly yearning as the gaze of Andromache upon retreating Hector,

"When every fear cast back her looks, and every look shed tears."

Without the passion, Hartley Coleridge has something of the refined stateliness of Mrs. Browning's emotion:—

"She was a child of noble nature's crowning,
 A smile of hers was like an act of grace;
 She had no winsome looks, no pretty frowning,
 Like daily beauties of the vulgar race:
 But if she smiled a light was on her face,
 A clear cool kindliness, a lunar beam
 Of peaceful radiance silvering o'er the stream
 Of human thought with unabiding glory;
 Not quite a waking truth, not quite a dream,
 A visitation bright and transitory."

We must needs dwell upon the poetic rather than
 the prosaic form in which the purest passion is por-
 trayed, since in its essence Love is the Poem of Life.
 The mysterious thralldom of the sentiment is finely
 expressed in the posthumous verses of Barry Corn-
 wall:—

THE RATIONALE LOVE.

MOTHER.

"Love not, O daughter of the golden hair,
 In man abides nor aught of true or fair
 To meet thy truth, to claim thy love and care."

DAUGHTER.

"I love, O mother! like the morning sun
 Love through my pulses now doth leap and run—
 I love, O mother, even as thou hast done."

MOTHER.

"Stern, selfish, coarse, inconstant, nursed in strife,
 Man strides a tyrant through the dream of life,
 His friend a martyr, and his slave a wife."

DAUGHTER.

"I love, O mother! in the haunted air
 I hear his voice, I see him brave and fair—
 I hear, I see, I love him everywhere!"

Better perhaps than any other poem of its kind, Tennyson's "Maud" transcribes the sentiment inspired by true English love. Fervent, yet subdued in their chaste elegance and delicacy of feeling, these verses fill the memory with haunting loveliness, like the recollection of a dewy morning among the fields and hedgerows of Surrey, or along the blossoming lanes of a Devonshire countryside. This is the flower of manly passion, chanted to measures of exceeding grace and beauty:—

"O let the solid ground
 Not fail beneath my feet
 Before my life has found
 What some have found so sweet.
 Then let come what come may,
 What matter if I go mad,
 I shall have had my day.

"Let the sweet heavens endure,
 Not close and darken above me
 Before I am quite, quite sure
 That there is one to love me;
 Then let come what come may
 To a life that has been so sad,
 I shall have had my day.

* * * *

"Go not, happy day,
 From the shining fields,
 Go not, happy day,
 Till the maiden yields.
 Rosy is the West,
 Rosy is the South,
 Roses are her cheeks,
 And a rose her mouth."

* * * *

"I have led her home, my love, my only friend.
 There is none like her, none.
 And never yet so warmly ran my blood
 And sweetly, on and on
 Calming itself to the long-wish'd-for end,
 Full to the banks, close on the promised good.

"None like her, none.
 Just now the dry-tongued laurels' pattering talk
 Seem'd her light foot along the garden walk,
 And shook my heart to think she comes once more;
 But even then I heard her close the door,
 The gates of Heaven are closed, and she is gone.

* * * *

"But now shine on, and what care I,
 Who in this stormy gulf have found a pearl
 The counter-charm of space and hollow sky,
 And do accept my madness, and would die
 To save from some slight shame one simple girl?

"Not die; but live a life of truest breath,
 And teach true life to fight with mortal wrongs.
 O, why should Love, like men in drinking-songs,
 Spice his fair banquet with the dust of death?
 Make answer, Maud my bliss,
 Maud made my Maud by that long lover's kiss.

* * * *

'She is coming, my own, my sweet,
 Were it ever so airy a tread,
 My heart would hear her and beat,
 Were it earth in an earthy bed;
 My dust would hear her and beat,
 Had I lain for a century dead;
 Would start and tremble under her feet,
 And blossom in purple and red.

* * * *

'O that 't were possible
 After long grief and pain
 To find the arms of my true love
 Round me once again!

"When I was wont to meet her
 In the silent woody places
 Of the land that gave us birth,
 We stood, tranced in long embraces
 Mixed with kisses sweeter, sweeter,
 Then anything on earth.

* * * *

" 'Tis a morning pure and sweet,
 And a dewy splendor falls
 On the little flower that clings
 To the turrets and the walls;
 'Tis a morning pure and sweet,
 And the light and shadow fleet;
 She is walking in the meadow,
 And the woodland echo rings;
 In a moment we shall meet;
 She is singing in the meadow,
 And the rivulet at her feet
 Ripples on in light and shadow
 To the ballad that she sings.

* * * *

“ And I loathe the squares and streets,
And the faces that one meets,
Hearts with no love for me;
Always I long to creep
Into some still cavern deep,
There to weep, and weep, and weep
My whole soul out to thee.”

All these are ideal portraitures of highest love, warmed by the breath of genius and limned with poetic skill and fervor. Yet they are proper to no rank or estate ; they but represent a universal feeling, and may be found exemplified among the humblest surroundings. Immortal Shakspeare was but a strolling actor, and Burns a plow-boy ; yet their souls were thrilled by the same emotions that moved Milton and Goethe, and the host of minnesingers, “lovers of fair women,” while the troubadours of Provence, as well as the lyric poets of a later day, representing all classes of society, alike responded to the kindling touch of love.

And in the world of reality who does not know that everywhere around us the human heart and intelligence are aglow with finer feeling ; that, even amid the well-nigh absolute liberty of our own republican institutions, and the laxity of social restraint, our land is ennobled by the presence of innumerable chaste and chivalric loves and happy homes ? Notwithstanding an occasional depraved

taste, one may safely aver that the vast majority of our youth would recoil from the skepticism of "Candide," the filth of the "Decameron," the low, insidious lechery of "Madame Maupin." It is the consciousness that men and women are better, as well as worse, than we know, which sustains our faith in human goodness and virtue. No sneer of cynic can shake our trust in a humanity whose pulse is quickened by the influence of purest Love. Indeed, were all else lost forever, the divine instinct of human affection might suffice to hallow and redeem mankind. Upon it the historian Buckle founds the strongest argument for immortality, and we may call to mind a similar thesis in the parting scene between Ion and Clemanthe in Talfourd's beautiful drama.

CLEMANTHE.

"O unkind!

And shall we never see each other?

ION.

Yes!

I have asked the dreadful question of the hills
That look eternal; of the flowing streams
That lucid flow for ever; of the stars,
Amid whose fields of azure my raised spirit
Hath trod in glory: all were dumb, but now,
While I thus gaze upon thy living face,
I feel the love that kindles through its beauty
Can never wholly perish:—we *shall* meet
Again, Clemanthe!"

—Talfourd's "Ion." Act V., sc. 2.

“Who shall say whether the Platonic ideal evolved from the old Greek chivalry was ever realized in actual experience?”

—John Addington Symonds.

“The evolutionary movement,” says Ribot, “gives the complete type of love. As it goes on, a breach of equilibrium is produced, at the expense of the physiological and instinctive elements, which gradually efface themselves before a more and more intellectual image.

“Certainly there lies at the root of all love the unconscious search for an ideal, but for an ideal perceived in a concrete, personal form, incarnate for the moment in an individual. By a process of mental abstraction similar to that which draws from perceptions the most general ideas, the concrete image is transformed into a vague scheme, a concept, an absolute ideal, and we have a purely intellectual, Platonic, mystical love; the emotion is totally intellectualized. Let us remark that this last stage of evolution is not so very rare. Not only do we meet with it sporadically, but it has been fixed and expressed, at certain moments of history, in institutions such as the chivalric love, of which Geoffrey Rudel seeking the Lady of Tripoli is the most perfect example, the troubadours the Provençal Courts of Love, deciding that true love cannot exist in marriage, and excludes all cohabitation, etc. We must not, how-

ever allow ourselves to be misled by appearances. Platonic and mystic lovers have always maintained that their sentiment is perfectly pure, and has nothing in common with the senses. Yet how could love exist without physical conditions, however attenuated we may suppose them? If they are wanting, all we have or can have is a pure intellectual state, the representation of an ideal conceived but not felt." Yet, we may ask, was Abelard's affection less ardent and sustained during the years in which he was physically deprived of sexual gratification? Did not, rather, his love of Héloïse acquire deeper intensity and feeling, albeit bereft of love's most sacred expression? *

The distinction between ideal and real love, the imaginative and the actual emotion, is not always quite clear. The affection of man for man, or woman for woman, is in truth more spiritual, and more unselfish, than human passion, in the nature of things excluded. Perhaps no finer instance of Platonic love can be cited than the devotion which Petrarch fruitlessly lavished upon Laura.† The qual-

* *cf.* Bayle—"Dictionnaire Historique et Critique, Vol. I, p. 63 (Abelard); Vol. V, pp. 253 et seq. (Combabus).

† "Giovanne donna sott' un verde lauro
Vidi più bianca, e piu fredda che neve
Non percossa dal Sol molti, e molt'anni:
E 'l suo parlar, e 'l bel viso e le chiome
Me piacquen sì, ch' i' l'ho dinanzi a gli occhi,
E avrò sempre, ov'io sia in poggio, o'n riva."

—Petrarca: C. 7.

ity of the poet's emotion may be inferred from the "Triunfo d'Amore" and the "Triunfo della Castita." In the 365 Sonnets and Canzone addressed either to Laura or to his own heart, beginning with chastest, most reverential love, we have an undying memorial of unrequited passion. These to Love and Laura :—

"Nova angeletta sovra l' ale accorta."

A beauteous angel on white winglets floating
 From heaven alighted on the flowery shore—
 There, as I passed alone by destiny,
 My thoughts to friendless solitude devoting,
 A silken leash she wove, and laid it o'er
 The grassy turf where greenest it doth lie.
 Therein my heart was prisoned, yet anon
 I grieved not, from her eyes so sweet a splendor shone.
— H. S.

"In qual parte del cielo, in quale idea."

Say from what part of heaven 'twas Nature drew,
 From what idea, that so perfect mold
 To form such features, bidding us behold,
 In charms below, what she above could do?
 What fountain nymph, what dryad maid e'er threw
 Upon the wind such tresses of pure gold?
 What heart such numerous virtues can unfold?
 Although the chiefest all my fond hopes slew.
 He for celestial charms may look in vain
 Who has not seen my fair one's radiant eyes,
 And felt their glances pleasingly beguile.

How Love can heal his wounds, then wound again,
 He only knows who knows how sweet her sighs,
 How sweet her converse, and how sweet her smile.

— Rev. Dr. Nott.

“Nell’età sua più bella, e più fiorita.”

In the full bloom and beauty of her years,
 When Love is wont our bosoms most to sway,
 My living Laura passed from earth away,
 Leaving the shroud our mortal being wears;
 And now in heaven transfigurèd appears,
 Whence she my spirit rules and cheers alway,
 Ah, why does not the light of the last day—
 First of that other life—dissolve my tears?
 That, as my thoughts pursue, so, hastening,
 My eager, happy soul may follow where
 I shall be free from so much suffering:
 This lot delayed but deepens my despair,
 And I fresh grief unto my burden bring—
 Three years this day had I too died, how fair!

— H. S.

“Alma felice, che sovente torni.”

When welcome slumber locks my torpid frame,
 I see thy spirit in the midnight dream;
 Thine eyes that still in living lustre beam;
 In all but frail mortality the same,
 Ah! then, from earth and all its sorrows free,
 Methinks I meet thee in each former scene
 Once the sweet shelter of a heart serene;
 Now vocal only while I weep for thee.
 For thee?—ah, no! from human ills secure,
 Thy hallowed soul exults in endless day,
 ’Tis I who linger on the toilsome way.

No balm relieves the anguish I endure,
Save the fond feeble hope that thou art near
To sooth my sufferings with an angel's tear.

— Anne Bannerman.

“Se lamentar augelli, o verdi fronde.”

If the lorn bird complain, or rustling weep
Soft summer airs o'er foliage waving slow,
Or the hoarse brook come murmuring down the steep,
Where on the enamelled bank I sit below,
With thoughts of love that bid my numbers flow,—
'Tis then I see her, though in earth she sleep!
Her, formed in heaven! I see, and hear, and know!
Responsive sighing, weeping as I weep:
“Alas!” She pitying says, “ere yet the hour,
Why hurry life away with swifter flight?
Why from thine eyes this flood of sorrow pour?
No longer mourn my fate! through death my days
Become eternal! to eternal light
These eyes, which seemed in darkness closed, I raise.”

— Lady Dacre.

“Mai non fu' in parte ove si chiar vedessi.”

Ne'er was a spot where I might see so clear
That I would see since I beheld my love:
Nor heavens filled with voices tenderer,
Nor where such freedom did my nature move.
Ne'er have I valley seen that did appear
So full of calm retreats, where the hushed grove
To my lament doth lend a secret ear—
So sweet a shrine in Cyprus found not Love.
The waters lisp of love, the hour, the trees,
The little birds, the fishes, grass and flowers
Together pray that I may love again;
But thou, my fair, from heaven, by the pain

The memory of thy death around me pours,
 Prayest that I may spurn earth's loveliest ties.

— H. S.

“Poi che la vista angelica, serena.”

Since the serene, angelic vision gone
 So suddenly my spirit in great pain
 Has left, and shadowy horror, by this strain
 I seek to still grief's solemn undertone.
 Just woe, perchance, leads me in tears to moan—
 He who decreed it knows, and Love, that vain
 Is other power to lure my heart again
 From weariness with which my days are strewn.
 And this one, Death, has snatched thy hand from me;—
 O happy Earth! within whose breast she lies,
 Whose mantle that fair human face doth bind:
 Where dost thou leave me, desolate and blind,
 Since the sweet, loving light of these fond eyes
 No more shall cheer my long obscurity?

— H. S.

That redoubtable philistine, Mr. Punch, once observed that Petrarch deserved his Laura more than his *lauro*—a witticism at the expense of truth, since in the range of amatory and elegiac verse there is scarcely to be found a loftier, more spiritualized strain of love more sweetly and winningly expressed. Only the poet's death could silence his long lament, though moved but by a dream.

“But this affection nothing strange I find;
 For who with reason can you e'er reprove

To love the semblant pleasing most your mind
 And yield your heart whence ye cannot remove ?
 No guilt in you, but in the tyranny of Love."

— Faerie Queene, Stanza XL.

The Sonnets of Michael Angelo, addressed to Vittoria Colonna, Marquesa di Pescara, who refused him her hand, are of peculiar quality, marked by great refinement of feeling, yet withal somewhat impersonal in their motive. It is doubtful whether the poet experienced even Platonic passion as others have known the sentiment. The sonnets, however, are noble in form and of the loftiest feeling. As Margaret Fuller said, "Petrarch ever clings to earth, but Michael soars." The twenty years of friendship with his inamorata witnessed the sculptor's grandest creations, he himself ascribing to Colonna's influence the inspiration through which they were wrought :

When my rude hammer to the stubborn stone
 Gives human shape, now this, now that, at will,
 Following his hand who wields and guides it still,
 It moves upon another's feet alone:
 But that which dwells in heaven the world doth fill
 With beauty by pure motions of its own:
 And since tools fashion tools which else were none,
 Its life makes all that lives with living skill.
 Now, for that every stroke excels the more
 The higher at the forge it doth ascend,
 Her soul that fashioned mine had sought the skies:
 Wherefore unfinished I must meet my end,
 If God, the great Artificer, denies
 That aid which was unique on earth before.

— John Addington Symonds, trans.

Mr. John Shorey, writing of Plato says :—“ Allied to mysticism is the quality which the eighteenth century deprecated as enthusiasm. The intellect is suffused with feeling. All the nobler sentiments partake of the intensity of passionate love and the solemnity of initiations. Hence the sage and serious doctrine of Platonic love—

‘ Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises with us, our life’s star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting
And cometh from afar.’ *

. . . To this throe, this yearning awakened by the sight of a beautiful body, men give the special name love (according to the Platonic philosophy). But love in the larger sense is all passionate thirst for happiness, all thrilling recollection of the absolute beauty, all desire to reproduce it on earth, not merely after the flesh, but in such immortal children of the spirit as the poems of Homer and Sappho, the laws of Solon and Lycurgus, the victories of Epaminondas. . . . The love of beauty is the predestined guide to the knowledge of the good and the true.” This takes us far afield ; yet it is the essence of Platonism.

A breath of Shelley’s muse half whispers the ideal, visionary adoration of which we write :

* Wordsworth.

I.

“One word is too often profaned
For me to profane it,
One feeling too falsely disdained
For thee to disdain it.
One hope is too like despair
For prudence to smother,
And pity from thee more dear
Than that from another.

II.

“I can give not what men call love,
But wilt thou accept not
The worship the heart lifts above
And the heavens reject not,
The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow?”

There is much in the higher poetry of the Italian and English Renaissance partaking of this enchantment inspired by contemplation of the beautiful. The spirit of knightly chivalry yet lingered among men — as indeed it shines in heroic thoughts and actions of to-day — and nations vied with one another in homage to woman.

Throughout the history of human hearts there are tender touches of Platonic love: in the rapt, wistful tremor of maidenly feeling which stirred the gentle bosom of Nausicaa as she looked upon Ulysses and bade him farewell forever; in the gracious and

courtly affection of Goethe for the child Bettina von Arnim, and the secret, yet passionate, loves of poets who have embalmed in imperishable verse the memories of early infatuation — woeful ballads written to a mistress' eyebrow, yet pathetically earnest and heartfelt, as in Tennyson's youthful lyrics. The passion in its more intellectual, yet none the less ardent, phase is also finely expressed in Prosper Mérimée's "*Lettres à une Inconnue*."

With regard to the singularly elegant and thoughtful Sonnets of Shakspeare, it is hardly necessary to remind the reader that there is little reason to believe them Platonic in the spiritual sense of the word. A high authority, Professor Dowden, thus characterizes them: "The poems, 154 in number, form two groups — 1-126 addressed to a young man of high station; 127-154 either addressed to or referring to a married woman, not beautiful according to the conventional standard, of dark complexion, highly accomplished, fascinating, but of stained character and irregular conduct. The two groups are connected. Shakspeare's young friend and patron, whom he addresses in words of measureless devotion, seems to have fallen into the toils of the woman to whom Shakspeare was himself attached by a passion which he felt to be degrading, yet which he could not overcome. The woman yielded herself to the younger

admirer who was socially the superior of Shakspeare. Hence an alienation between the friends, increased by the fact that the youth was now the favorer of a rival poet ; but in the close all wrongs were forgotten and the friendships renewed on a firmer basis. Such is the story to be read in the 'Sonnets' if we take them, as they ought to be taken, in their natural sense. But some critics have imagined that they deal with ideal themes or may set forth a spiritual allegory. Many attempts have been made to identify Mr. W. H., the dark woman, and the rival poet. . . . It is not likely that the facts so long hidden will ever be revealed."

Whatever be the origin and motive of these verses they are justly regarded as among the rarest creations of poetic art, while, if they be not prompted by pure love, they are its fairest counterpart conceived by human fancy. Certainly there are sonnets such as,

"Let me not to the marriage of true minds"—

or,

"Shall I compare thee to a summer's day"—

or,

"When I have seen by Time's fell hand defaced"—

and many others which in their chaste form, depth of feeling, and profound philosophy seem to flow only from sources of exalted passion, tempered by a wisdom half divine.

Compare Sir Philip Sydney :

“Stella! the fullness of my thoughts of thee
 Can not be stayed within my panting breast;
 But they do swell and struggle forth of me
 Till that in words thy figure be expressed:
 And yet as soon as they so formed be,
 According to my lord Love’s own behest,
 With sad eyes I their weak proportion see
 To portrait that which in the world is best,
 So that I can not choose but write my mind,
 And can not choose but put out what I write:
 While these poor babes their death in birth do find.
 And now my pen these lines had dashed quite,
 But that they stopped his fury from the same
 Because their fore-front bare sweet Stella’s name.”

In the love-verses of Heinrich Heine, wrung from his yearning spirit in cadences of pathetic, strenuous warmth and sweetness, there are notes of the tenderest ideal love. “Du bist wie eine Blume”—who can forget its loving benediction ?

Thou seemest like a flower,
 So pure and fair and bright;
 A melancholy yearning
 Steals on me at thy sight.
 I fain would lay in blessing
 My hands upon thy hair;
 Imploring God to keep thee
 So bright, so pure, and fair.

This, too, “Das Meer hat seine Perlen,” is Heine’s own :

The ocean hath its pearls,
The heaven hath its stars,
But oh! my heart, my heart,
My heart hath its love.

Great is the sea and the heavens,
But greater is my heart;
And fairer than pearls or stars
Glistens and glows my love.

Thou little youthful maiden,
Come unto my mighty heart!
My heart, the sea, and the heavens
Are melting away with love.

—Emma Lazarus, trans.

And here is a less familiar, but characteristic song:

Full many pleasures have I known—
Women, ay many a one;
But as each gazes on my heart,
She gazes and is gone.

And one would laugh before she went,
And one turn ashy white—
But Kitty wept a bitter flood
Before she took her flight.

Alas, poor Heine! The music of Mendelssohn and Schumann interpreted his passionate sorrow, and are as an apotheosis; yet the author of "Das Meer hat seine Perlen" is not to be understood save through a kindred sympathy and depth of passionate longing.

It is decreed that certain souls of finest emotional capacity shall suffer this unsatisfied, indefinable thirst for a congenial affection never vouchsafed to them.

De Staël was assuredly loved, as she was lovable ; yet in the stress of unfulfilled dreams of her ideal she exclaims : “ I have never been loved as I love.”*

The religious sentiment, perverted as it may be at times — even tending to erotism, as we have seen — is yet a determining influence in awakening the saintliest ideal love. Upon the secluded meditations of the devout worshipper — the youth and maiden of daily acquaintance no less than the anchorite sworn to celibacy — there steals a holy sense of “ the True, the Beautiful, and the Good,” as typified in human love. There are calm, reflective Sabbath intuitions unknown to secular life — moments when the heart, alike of rationalist and churchman, is melted in soothing, contrite reverie or is filled with bounding joy. Such moments are conducive to sentimental aspiration, and beside us in our walk, holding our hand in the church choir, or sitting beside us in the pew, the little love-god whispers to our listening fancy the message with which his innocent thought is freighted. It is not exactly the sense of devotional worship — of being, at least for a day, at our purest, highest, and best ; it is not the pleasing consciousness of our own fresh apparel, or the ravishing charm of a certain Easter bonnet or other feminine finery : all

*“ *Jamais je n’ai été aimée comme j’aime !* ”

seems sweeter, fairer, more delightful, and the air we breathe incense from heaven. To-morrow, at the desk or shopping, we shall not feel quite like this. We have been moved, perhaps unawares, by the magic spell of Love, and the affluence of our happy thoughts fills us with inexpressible peace and gratitude.

And to him or her who, obedient to the dictates of the Church, has assumed the self-abnegation that abjures outward bonds of affection, comes often, as we know, the desolate consciousness of an incomplete, vacant existence which no chastity of private life, no Christ-like devotion to human charities, can wholly illumine. The life of St. Bernard seems replete with all that is divinest in mortality: one only void, never to be filled, one only emotion — to which he owed his being — never to be entertained. The noble “Confessions of St. Augustine,” the infinite pity and sublime resignation of Lamennais — “*Les Paroles d’un Croyant*” — are eloquent with spiritual power of Love. And in considering these things let us not be beguiled by the doctrine of isolation: “Exceptions prove the rule” is but a logical fallacy, illustrating, if anything, the despotism, and the mischievousness of proverbial philosophy. Truly, we may well bow our heads in passing tribute to the “Sisters of Mercy” and similar organizations de-

signed to alleviate human suffering everywhere, the lives of whose votaries are pledged to denial of that which, to the vast majority of mankind, is the soul's tenderest dream and most exultant hope. Think you there are not hearts among these almoners of God that at times pulsate warmly with the thought of mortal, as well as divine, love? But they give no sign, and their outward deportment suggests only consecration of self to the behests of philanthropic toil and care, in the service of the Master who bade men love their neighbors as themselves.

Yet this silent emotion of love, often imagined in the thoughts of the recluse, is not confined to asceticism. In every-day society we meet with men and women deep in the sanctuary of whose quiet meditations we fancy some unuttered longing to abide. They "die with all their music in them," the lonely secret of their lives being shrouded under a veil of *insouciance*, or silenced in affectionate devotion to others. The portrait of the spinster in Whittier's "Snow Bound" is a lasting rebuke to them who stoop to thoughtless derision of "single-blessedness." As a rule, however, the passion of love is patent to the student of human nature. "Amor tussisque non celantur," Love and a cough cannot be concealed; as Heine says in kindly raillery:

“Dearest friend, thou art in love,
And that love must be confessed;
For I see thy glowing heart
Plainly scorching through thy vest.”

A look, a word, a gesture, may be confession, and frequently an uncontrollable sentiment breaks forth in undisguised acknowledgment; for, as Touchstone declares:

“But love is blind, and lovers cannot see
The pretty follies that themselves commit.”

The trees may not blazon their attachment, as in the forest of Arden, but lip and eye bespeak their thoughts unmistakably, and a maiden's blush is wont to be her heart's interpreter.

— “The sounding cataract
 Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock
 The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
 Their colors and their forms, were then to me
 An appetite; a feeling and a love,
 That had no need of a remoter charm.”

— Wordsworth.

There is yet a phase of human feeling so closely akin to ideal love as to deserve mention here — the love of Nature. It is not difficult to associate with human tenderness the fond enthusiasm of Isaac Walton, of Francis d'Assisi, of White of Selbourne, and Thoreau. They brought to their studies and pursuits an ardor scarcely to be measured by empiric investigation, and their lives were tinged with a quality too fine, too beautiful, to be derived from vulgar curiosity. Of Thoreau, for instance, it is not too much to claim that he *loved* his woodland haunts, with a passionate feeling purely impersonal, to be sure, yet so nearly allied to sentimental emotion that it appears almost to have supplanted any deeper desire of his heart. Still, he was warmly human, as the careful student of his writings may readily discover. Note the delicacy and refinement with which he conveys to us a love of fellow-men seldom understood by those who perceive only the naturalist. Musing by a woodman's hut in winter, he reflects :

“Singing birds and flowers, perchance, have begun to appear here ; for flowers as well as weeds follow in the footsteps of man. . . . The leaves are dripping on the south side of this simple roof, while the titmouse lisps in the pines, and the genial warmth of the sun around the door is somewhat kind and human.”

Of a fisherman’s nets he says :

“The twine looks like a new river weed, and is to the river as a beautiful memento of man’s presence in nature, discovered as silently and delicately as a foot-print in the sand.”

Again he writes :

“Next to Nature it seems as if man’s actions were the most natural, they so gently accord with her.”

And in the following tender allegory how much of life there is, how much of earthly, human care and vicissitude, of joy and pain, and the deep tragedy of spiritual conflict !

“There is, however, this consolation to the most way-worn traveler upon the dustiest road, that the path his feet describe is so perfectly symbolical of human life — now climbing the hill, now descending into the vales. From the summits he beholds the heavens and the horizon. From the vales he looks up to the heights again. He is reading the old

lessons still, and though he may be very weary and travel-worn, it is yet sincere experience."

And here is an instance of Thoreau's habitual cheeriness—an unaffected bonhomie characteristic of the man, and familiar to all who knew him:

. . . "A man [the landlord] of such universal sympathies, and so broad and genial a human nature, that he would fain sacrifice the tender but narrow ties of friendship to a broad, sunshiny, fair-weather-and-foul friendship for his race."

Note, too, how in the following meditation upon a winter sunset the culminating thought turns lovingly to mankind, revealing the undertone of human emotion that softened and spiritualized an apparently austere philosophy:

"When we reflected that this was not a solitary phenomenon, never to happen again, but that it would happen forever and ever, an infinite number of evenings, and cheer and reassure the latest child that walked there, it was more glorious still."

And is there not a touch of domestic feeling, as well as depth of spiritual insight and lofty resignation, in this:

"Sometimes our fate grows too homely and familiarly serious ever to be cruel."

Could brave and thoughtful surrender of a trusting soul to the edicts of the inevitable be more eloquently

expressed? Yet to most readers Thoreau's religious attitude seems rather that of Prometheus before high Jove. To human sympathies alone, moreover, can we ascribe a pathetic metaphor in "Maine Woods," where, speaking of his preference for viewing mountain scenery after a clearing-up shower, he adds:

"There is no serenity so fair as that which is just established in a tearful eye."

Finally, let us turn to his own supreme testimony to the warm, generous and faithful, though often concealed, emotions which imbued all Thoreau's profounder life and thought. Here is his farewell to mankind:

"My greatest skill has been to want but little. For joy I could embrace the earth. I shall rejoice to be buried in it. And then I think of those among men who will know that I loved them though I tell them not."

These instances of Thoreau's feeling, chiefly from "Excursions," require no detailed comment to show the exquisite sensibility from which they spring. In the *nirvāna* of his half-braminical meditations it was not in his noble nature to forget the throbbing world around him, though his philosophy lay in the happy equipoise of fidelity to self and altruistic sacrifice of private weal. Only as we are lifted above the level of conventional thought and sentiment do we realize

how rare and beautiful a nature lay beneath that unpretentious guise, and how the most impersonal exterior may veil from the eyes of the world a wealth of tenderness and love. Is it wonder that a naturalist of so fine a mould should regard his favorite woods and streams with aught but quiet ecstasy of affection?*

It is said of Francis d'Assisi that fishes swam into his hand and birds lighted on his shoulder, as though conscious of his great love of them. And to White there was no living thing in Selbourne with which his rambles failed to make him familiar. Botanists, especially, from Linnaeus to Dr. Gray, have cherished the floral offspring of nature with peculiar regard and solicitude. In his Lapland journey the Swedish

* "Think me not unkind and rude
That I walk alone in grove and glen,
I go to the god of the wood
To fetch his word to men.

* * * *

Chide me not, laborious band,
For the idle flowers I brought;
Every aster in my hand
Goes home loaded with a thought.

* * * *

One harvest from thy field
Homeward brought the oxen strong;
Another crop thine acres yield,
Which I gather in a song."

— Emerson's "Apology."

scientist describes his privations while examining a flora hitherto unknown. "A little dry bread and salt, no meat, and incredible hardships and toil," such was the affectionate enthusiasm of Linnaeus, and the Himalayan explorations of Hooker and those of Darwin in the Malaysian Archipelago display a similar devotion.

"And I have loved thee, Ocean!"

exclaims Byron — and there is no poetry of Nature which attains his inspiration :

"There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
 There is a rapture on the lonely shore;
 There is society where none intrudes,
 By the deep sea, and music in its roar:
 I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
 From these our interviews, in which I steal
 From all I may be or have been before,
 To mingle with the Universe, and feel
 What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal."

Byron apostrophized nature, however, viewing it partly through the strongly refracting, yet somewhat turbid, medium of private consciousness. His was scarcely the calmer, more philosophical contemplation of him who

"Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
 Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

“Hail, wedded love, mysterious law, true source
Of human offspring, sole propriety
In Paradise of all things common else!”

— Milton.

We have sketched the varied affinities of human passion in its relations to the individual, and the immediate, more restricted play of amatory sentiment. There remains the sacred flowering of truest Love — the crown and glory of its divine nature, the family.

“The end of living is to bring forth life.”

—
“Virtue if not a God, yet God's chief part!
Be thou the knot of this their open vow:
That still he be her head, she be his heart;
He lean to her. she unto him do bow;
Each other still allow;
Like oak and mistletoe,
Her strength from him, his praise from her do grow!
In which most lovely train
O Hymen! long their coupled joys maintain!

But thou, foul Cupid, sire to lawless lust!
Be thou far hence with thy empoisoned dart,
Which, though of glittering gold, shall here take rust,
Where simple love, which chasteness doth impart,
Avoids thy purple art,
Not needing charming skill
Such minds with sweet affection for to fill:
Which being pure and plain,
O Hymen! long their coupled joys maintain!”

— Sir Philip Sydney.—“Epithalamium.”

In the associations which cluster round the hearth-stone the highest fulfillment of mortal aspiration finds expression: the home is founded — perhaps the idyllic picture presented in Goethe's "Hermann und Dorothea" is fondly realized. Here is the realm of woman, in which, in truth she reigns supreme. "The ideal which the wife and mother makes for herself, the manner she understands duty and life, contain the fate of the community. Her faith becomes the star of the conjugal ship, and her love the animating principle that fashions the future of all belonging to her. Woman is the salvation or destruction of the family. She carries its destinies in the folds of her mantle." — Amiel's Journal.

"And, would'st thou to the same aspire,
This is the art thou must employ,
Live greatly, so thou shalt acquire,
Unknown capacities of joy."

— "The Angel in the House."

"I saw her upon nearer view,
A spirit, yet a woman too!
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet:
A creature not too bright and good
For human nature's daily food;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears and smiles."

— Wordsworth.

It is true that many of the sweetest, most ideal alliances are childless. Fate to them, while seeming pitiless, is benignant, and a profound, heart-breaking, though unuttered, sympathy of sorrow binds together husband and wife in indissoluble bonds of purest affection — possibly the most spiritualized known to mortals. Yet at the marriage altar rarely does love contemplate a future like this. The thought of motherhood illumines the silent meditations of the bride: the dream of being called “father” lifts into heroic attitude the happy groom. To feel the soft arms of infancy folded about our neck; to listen to the confiding, childish prattle from the lips of one whom we may exultantly call our own; to watch the fair unfolding of life’s flower, and know that it is ours to tend and cherish; to stand by the little crib, shrine of our tenderest affections, and mark the seal of heaven upon the placid countenance, as though our darling communed with angels — Earth brings to us no vision of the Beautiful like this, no bliss which so thrills the soul with mute ecstasy of tears, for it is the incarnation of divinest Love.

“Meglio è morir che trarre
 Selvaggia vita in solitudin dove
 A niun sei caro, e di nessun ti cale.”

— Alfieri’s “Saul,” Act I, sc. 4.

O sweeter death! than wear away a life
 Of lonely hermitage—by none beloved,
 And the heart's passion moved to love of none.

— H. S.

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